

EFFECTIVE CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION IN CHURCH LEADERSHIP: STUDY OF
SELECTED PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES, NAIROBI

BY
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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree award in any other university.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my late father, Mzee Wilson Mwangangi Mutyambwii whose passion for conflict transformation inspired me from early years. He was not only a skilled mediator but also a passionate reconciler and peacemaker. His life attests to the fact that even before John P. Lederach invented the conflict transformation model, it was already being practiced on the African soil. His exploits in the arena of resolving conflicts bent on preserving the relationships of the parties in conflict have ignited a passion in me to want to archive the wisdom encapsulated in the African cultural values.

Before he succumbed to a chronic disease which he had bravely borne for 21 years, he had successfully handled hundreds of cases where two or more people were in sharp conflicts. Great was his passion for peace and harmony in the society that he even handled cases on his wheel chair and on his sick bed. Indeed, he was one of the unsung heroes that African soil has ever produced. My late father is my hero! His wisdom still inspires and guides the large family he left behind.

At this critical moment in Africa when conflicts not only characterize the politics of the day but also frequent the places of worship, such men and women are being called upon to stand up and champion the cause of peace in a world that is fast degenerating into anarchy and a vicious cycle of conflicts.

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ABSTRACT

From the corridors of power, to the media, to the political arena, to the AU and UN summits, to academic institutions, to places of worship and documented writings, it can be correctly argued that conflicts have become a subject we cannot wish away. Initially, it was a vocabulary found in the politics of the day. However, of late, it has become a common word in the church circles. As such, there has been a growing concern among the Christian community with regard to the escalating rate of leadership conflicts in the churches. The local media has repeatedly featured incidents of nasty conflicts in churches with some turning violent and others ending up in court. This has been quite disturbing given that according to Jesus, the church is supposed to be “the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14) and the role model for effective conflict transformation and peace-building.

If the church doesn’t lead by example, there may be no hope for the African continent which is currently plunged into a vicious cycle of armed conflicts. As such, the study sought to investigate the major factors that contribute to leadership conflicts in selected Pentecostal churches within Nairobi and explore effective approaches of transforming the leadership conflicts. The researcher explored in details the relevant scholarly sources in this area, established critical gaps and composed constructive criticism. Having identified the research problem and the significance of the study, the major causes of conflicts among Pentecostal church leaders were identified. The study also investigated the models of conflict approaches used by the said church leaders. The role of institutional structures in conflict transformation and peace-building was also investigated. The study further documented the conflict strategies used by the said churches that have proved to be successful and transformative. To integrate the study with biblical principles, an exegetical study was carried out on Galatians 2:6-9.

The study focused on one area, Nairobi. It was mainly qualitative and employed both questionnaires and interviews. The data was analyzed using SPSS and the findings presented in frequency tables, percentages, pie-charts, graphs and descriptive statistics. This formed the basis of answering the four research questions. The study concluded from the findings that Pentecostal churches in Nairobi had weak and dysfunctional institutional structures that had loopholes for abuse of power and financial mismanagement. The absence of accountability structures also made it difficult for the bishops and pastors to be held accountable whenever they were implicated in either moral or doctrinal scandals. As such, the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi need to strengthen their institutional structures to seal off the loop holes. In addition, they need to embrace models of conflict approaches that transform the leadership conflicts. Putting the whole study together, the researcher shares the opinion that conflict transformation model, tied with the biblical principles and informed by the African cultural approach is perhaps the effective approach to transforming conflicts among the Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIC	:	African Instituted Churches
AU	:	African Union
CT	:	Conflict Transformation
DC	:	Deliverance Church
ILU	:	International Leadership University
JCC	:	Jesus Celebration Centre
KTN	:	Kenya Television Network
NIV	:	New International Version
NT	:	New Testament
PB	:	Peace-building
PC	:	Pentecostal Church
RGC	:	Redeemed Gospel Church
SPSS	:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UN	:	United Nations

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Nairobi is the capital and biggest city of Kenya. It was founded by the British in 1899 as a simple rail depot. It registered a population of 3,138,369 people during the 2009 National Census according to a report by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. Of late, the city has experienced a mushrooming of churches especially those of the Pentecostal persuasion. This phenomenon could perhaps be attributed to the freedom of worship provided in the Kenya Constitution coupled with leadership wrangles and conflicts which most of the times escalate to the point of splitting the churches.

As Timothy Monsma correctly observes, “There is a leadership crisis in the churches of Africa today and it is especially acute in the cities.”¹ Of late, there has been a growing concern among the Christian community with regard to the escalating rate of leadership conflicts in the church. The local media has repeatedly featured incidents of nasty conflicts with some turning violent. Cases of violent confrontations, bitter verbal exchanges, fist fights and nasty court battles involving church leaders have become regular prime time news items.

The shame of armed policemen being sent to contain chaos in church compounds projects the church in a bad light. This is quite disturbing given that according to Jesus, the church is supposed to be “the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14). As a matter of fact, it is the church of Jesus Christ that should be the role model for effective conflict transformation and peace-building. Jesus says, “Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16, NIV).

In Matthew 28:19, Jesus commissioned the church to “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations” (NIV). It is practically impossible for the church to carry out the Great

1. Timothy Monsma, *An Urban Strategy for Africa* (Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 1979), 111.

Commission if she is always ensued in endless leadership conflicts and wrangles. A survey on Nairobi churches done by Daystar University in 1989 noted that, “While a church must perform a variety of activities, it is clear that evangelism needs to be a primary activity if our churches are going to grow.”² There is no way this goal can be achieved unless there is peace and harmony in the church.

Leadership conflicts constitute major setbacks to a number of things in the church. For instance, if there were no conflicts, the church would more likely register phenomenal growth. In Acts 2:47, the Bible says, “And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (NIV). Unlike in the early church, church growth in today’s church setup has seriously been hampered by leadership conflicts. Where church splits have occurred, the results have always been several small weak churches that merely struggle to survive.

It has also been noted that congregants tend to lose trust in the church whenever leadership conflicts occur and as a result they withhold giving their tithes and offerings. This phenomenon causes unnecessary financial struggles in the church. As a result, the church cannot adequately finance her projects due to limited finances. Poor giving impacts negatively on evangelism since it takes a lot of money to sponsor evangelistic projects.

In addition, conflicts among church leaders impact negatively on the spiritual health of the congregants. This phenomenon usually leaves the flock confused, hurting and in despair. It drains the spiritual energy of the flock and leaves behind painful memories. At times, it contributes to some “turning their back” on the Lord Jesus and walking away from the faith. If left unchecked, it can easily lead to church decline.

Recently, a sharp conflict between the Archbishop of the Redeemed Gospel Church and a renowned bishop in the same denomination resulted in the two going separate ways. Ever since

2. Daystar University, *Summary of the Nairobi Church Survey* (Nairobi: Daystar University College, 1989), 52-53.

JCC split from the RGC, the two parties have been tussling over the ownership of the branch churches. The matter is now in court. The two bishops hardly see eye to an eye. This has left the flock divided, confused, hurt, discouraged and perhaps some contemplating quitting the faith.

The Standard Newspaper which made public the hostility between the two parties noted, “Redeemed Gospel Church head Bishop Arthur Kitonga and his Jesus Celebration Centre (JCC) counterpart Wilfred Lai are locked in a legal battle over the ownership of a church in Makindu, Makueni County.”³ Interestingly, majority of the Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi held RGC in high esteem as perhaps the most stable indigenous Pentecostal church denomination. As such, the court battle between Archbishop Arthur Kitonga and Bishop Wilfred Lai has caught many Pentecostal church leaders by surprise.

According to Louis Kriesberg, “Conflicts are generally fluid; they move through a series of stages as conflicts emerge, escalate, de-escalate and are settled.”⁴ A critical examination of the fluid nature of conflicts reveals that these stages may as well be potential grounds for enhancing peace as much as launching pads for fresh conflicts. Jonathan Tice maintains, “The level of the conflict will be determined by the orientation of the parties, the degree of polarization with which the issues are framed, and the kinds of tactics the parties are willing and allowed to employ.”⁵

Nairobi being the capital city of Kenya, one would ordinarily expect more theologically trained church leaders, strong institutional structures and a relatively mature clergy. Whereas this could be true of the mainstream churches, it may not be the case with the mushrooming Pentecostal churches. According to Laurenti Magesa “AICs have their shortcomings, including lack of a coherent theology, weak institutional structures, inadequate responses to poverty, and

3. Willis Oketch, “Preachers Lock Horns in Court over Church,” *Standard Newspaper*, June 5, 2015.

4. <http://edoc.vifapol.de/opus/volltexte/2013/4684/pdf/kriesberg-handbook.pdf> accessed 11/20/2014

5. Jonathan Tice, “Conflict Resolution in the Local Church” *IN’ Reformed Review: A Theological Journal of Western Theological Seminary*, Vol. 58, No. 2 (Winter, 2004-05):134.

insufficient engagement against oppression and discrimination in the modern globalized world.”⁶ Since most of the Pentecostal churches fall into the category of African Instituted Churches, they most likely share in the weaknesses highlighted above.

Theological incoherence is most likely occasioned by lack of sound theological training while weak institutional structures could perhaps be attributed to the attitude which the Pentecostal church leaders have towards institutional structures. This position is supported by the 1989 Daystar University survey of the Nairobi churches which showed that “one-half have had no formal Bible or Theological training.”⁷ This is in reference to the clergy. Theological training is helpful in the sense that it includes aspects that would help in conflict transformation and peace-building. Incoherent theology or lack of it coupled with weak institutional structures leaves the Pentecostal churches in a situation prone to leadership conflicts and wrangles.

Timothy Monsma shares the same observation and points out, “Many urban pastors have not received adequate training and many urban churches are pastor-less.”⁸ This assertion is corroborated by recent media reports that featured a story of a Nairobi based pastor of a large church who dropped out in form two and has never advanced his education beyond that level. As such, given that most of these mushrooming Pentecostal churches do not even have constitutions and policy documents that govern the operations of the church, leadership conflicts tend to escalate very fast to the point of verbal violence, fist fights and nasty court battles.

The fact that such conflicts escalate to physical violence with some resulting in church splits and ensuing court battles is an indication that something is seriously wrong with the models of conflict approaches being employed to address leadership conflicts in the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi. The phenomenon also points to a gap with regard to the manner in which

6. Laurenti Magesa, *What is not Sacred? African Spirituality* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2014): 192.

7. Daystar University, 45.

8. Timothy Monsma, 111.

conflict transformation and peace-building has been facilitated in Pentecostal churches to avert chaos.

As previously noted, in 1989, Daystar University published a report on a survey of the church in Nairobi. The main emphasis of the survey was on church attendance in the city, and the conclusions of the research were mainly based on the figures that emerged. The survey showed that only 20% attended church regularly while another 20% were non-Christians. Interestingly, the remaining 60% whom the survey categorized as “nominal Christians” did not attend church. As such, they are Christians in name only.

In spite of the fact that this survey was carried out 26 years ago, there is every indication that the trends it revealed are still largely valid today. Commenting on the 60% who did not attend church, the survey noted, “Many of these people have participated in churches in the past, but for some reason they have decided that the church is not important to them or relevant to their problems and needs.”⁹ To any serious researcher, 60% is such a huge figure that automatically elicits a serious investigation.

In 1998, Daystar University carried out another survey focusing on the Nairobi youth only. The survey revealed that “Christianity is the religion of almost all 94% of the youth surveyed.”¹⁰ It is a known fact that conflicts among church leaders portray the church in a bad light and impact negatively on her credibility. The youth are the leaders of tomorrow. If 94% of Nairobi’s youth lose faith in the church due to these leadership conflicts and turn elsewhere, it would be disastrous for the nation. The moral fabric of the nation would simply crumble as a result.

In 2004, another study was carried out by evangelical church groups (Africa Centre for Missions - Finish the Task). The study found out that while Protestantism nominally accounted

9. Daystar University, 22.

10. Daystar University, *Nairobi Youth Survey: Challenge to the Churches* (Nairobi: Daystar University, 1998), 7.

for 65% of Kenyan Christians, only 7% of the population attended a Protestant or evangelical church on a typical Sunday. The research further noted that Protestant churches were worried about the rise of “a godless generation” youngsters aged 24 and below who are Christians only in name.¹¹ The findings of the three surveys seem to point to a declining trend in church attendance. Unfortunately, the studies didn’t go ahead to establish specifically the factors behind this trend.

Whereas there could be many reasons behind this worrying trend, leadership conflicts cannot be ruled out as perhaps a leading factor contributing to such a trend. It is a common observation that whenever church leaders clash, people tend to lose faith in the church and some opt to stay at home. Ordinarily, the youth ends up being the hardest hit due to peer pressure and other competing interests. As such, the future of the church in Kenya hangs on a balance unless something is done.

Leadership conflicts are not a new phenomenon in the church circles. Since the inception of the Christian church, church leaders from generation to generation have not been spared conflicts. As a matter of fact, ever since the Great East - West schism of 1054 A.D which saw the “...one holy, Catholic, apostolic and Chalcedonian Church ... rent asunder into two separate and hostile Churches,”¹² the history of the Christian church has been characterized by leadership conflicts. The break-up was so bad such that the Orthodox Patriarch and Pope Leo IX excommunicated and pronounced anathemas on each other. In the opinion of the researcher, this break-up would have been prevented if only the church leaders employed a conflict approach that not only resolves the conflict but also preserves the relationships of the church leaders.

Astute scholars in church history point to various factors that triggered the Great East - West schism of 1054 A.D. Rivalry between Rome and Constantinople, differences in religious

11. <http://www.religionnewsblog.com/9537/godless-young-generation-worries-kenya-churches> accessed on 6/24/2015

12. N.R Needham, *2000 Years of Christ’s Power, Part Two: The Middle Ages* (London: Grace Publications Trust, 2000), 124.

practice, theological differences and the controversial “filioque” clause have often been cited as the major causes of the schism. However, there is consensus among the scholars that the key underlying issue that triggered the conflict among the church leaders was the addition of the “filioque” clause to the Nicene Creed by the West. As such, the leadership conflict was primarily theological. Filioque is a Latin term for “and from the Son.”

According to Wayne Grudem, the term refers to, “A clause inserted into the Nicene Creed to indicate that the Holy Spirit proceeds not from the Father only but also from the Son.”¹³ Needham concurs with this fact and notes, “...the most crucial difference between East and West was over the doctrine of the Trinity and the ‘filioque’ clause in the Nicene Creed.”¹⁴ The “filioque” clause was therefore the chief theological difference between the East and West which led to the last dogmatic clash that would perpetually break the Christian catholic front. In the words of Mark Noll, “To this day, the Eastern church remains astounded at the casualness with which the West added the word ‘filioque’ to the Nicene Creed.”¹⁵

It is unfortunate that most of the leadership conflicts end up in church schisms and church splits leaving behind a trail of emotional pain, bitterness, hurt feelings, discord, rivalries and strained relationships. Perhaps, this is the reason why Timothy Monsma advises, “Urban churches must solve the leadership crisis, and must make her worship more meaningful.”¹⁶ However, as Jonathan Tice argues, “The level of the conflict will be determined by the orientation of the parties, the degree of polarization with which the issues are framed, and the kinds of tactics the parties are willing and allowed to employ.”¹⁷

In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, “Blessed are the peacemakers....” (Matthew 5:9, NIV). Peacemakers are people who have learned the art of responding to conflicts

13. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1994), 1242.

14. N.R Needham, 124.

15. Mark Noll, *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2001), 136.

16. Timothy Monsma, 111.

17. Jonathan Tice, 134.

constructively. According to Ken Sande, “Peacemakers are people who breathe grace.”¹⁸ As such, peacemaking is an essential part of the Christian life. The church of Jesus Christ is expected to bring glory to God by demonstrating the reconciling love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ.

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He commissioned His disciples to “Go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19, NIV). The church therefore has a ministry of reconciling people to God and to each other. She ought to be passionate about bringing honor to God by revealing the reconciling love and power of Jesus Christ. However, this has not usually been the case.

Today’s church is entangled in ugly leadership conflicts that project her badly before the unbelieving world. This has impacted negatively on her credibility and public image. Ken Sande correctly points out, “When believers are bitterly embroiled in disagreement or coldly estranged from one another, few people will pay attention when we try to talk with them about the reconciling love of Jesus Christ.”¹⁹ Worst of it all, is when these conflicts occur in the top church leadership.

The fact that most of these leadership conflicts escalate to such phenomenal levels point to a gap worth investigating in the manner in which the church deals with leadership conflicts. As such, there is a dire need for the church not only to learn how to resolve leadership conflicts but also to learn how to transform them effectively if at all the church will have to fulfill her mission on earth. Since the Pentecostal churches continue to attract a huge following of Nairobi residents especially those of African origin, it is worth investigating the phenomenon.

The 1989 Daystar University survey of the Nairobi churches noted, “Experts tell us that there will be four million people in the city by the year 2000 and nearly 19 million people by

18. Ken Sande, *The Peace Maker* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2004), 11.

19. Ibid, 12.

2025.”²⁰ Despite the quoted demographic figures appearing blown out of proportion, the 2009 National Census report according to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics seem to validate the prediction.

The survey documented, “It is this great increase in the population which presents the Nairobi church with both its greatest challenge and its greatest opportunity.”²¹ Since the identity of the church is wrapped up in mission, the church must rise up above her present leadership challenges and become the missional community of disciples she is destined to be. As such, a more transformative approach of addressing leadership conflicts must be sought as part of the strategic positioning of the Nairobi churches to bring in this huge harvest of souls.

Statement of the Problem

Lack of effective conflict transformation among church leaders in the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi has resulted in strained relationships, church splits and hostility among churches. The fact that such conflicts escalate to physical violence with some resulting in church splits and nasty court battles is an indication that something is perhaps seriously wrong with the models of approaches being used to address the conflicts among Pentecostal church leaders.

The phenomenon may also point to a weakness in the efficiency of the institutional structures of the Pentecostal churches which ideally should provide the administrative framework within which leadership conflicts are channeled. Studies have been done on ways of growing churches and church polity; however the researcher did not come across a study that has been done on conflict transformation among Pentecostal churches in Nairobi. This study sought to address effective conflict transformation among church leaders in Pentecostal churches within Nairobi.

20. Daystar University, 71.

21. Ibid, 71.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the major factors that contribute to leadership conflicts in selected Pentecostal churches within Nairobi and explore effective approaches of transforming the leadership conflicts.

Research Objectives

The study seeks:

- (a) To identify the major causes of conflicts among church leaders in Pentecostal churches.
- (b) To investigate the models of conflict approaches employed by Pentecostal church leaders in addressing leadership conflicts.
- (c) To investigate the institutional structures which have been in place in the Pentecostal churches which facilitate conflict transformation and peace-building.
- (d) To document outcomes of successful conflict transformation strategies in the Pentecostal churches.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

- (a) What have been the major causes of conflicts among church leaders in Pentecostal churches?
- (b) What have been the models of conflict approaches employed by Pentecostal church leaders in addressing leadership conflicts?
- (c) What institutional structures have been in place in the Pentecostal churches which facilitate conflict transformation and peace-building?

- (d) What have been successful conflict strategies used in the Pentecostal churches which have been transformative?

Significance of the Study

The study would assist church leaders to know how to transform leadership conflicts not only as a way of averting violent confrontations and subsequent church splits but also as a way of strengthening bonds and relationships among church leaders and members which is a prerequisite for fulfilling the Great Commission. The study would also be beneficial to church leaders especially in understanding the major causes and consequences of leadership conflicts and hence the need to effectively transform the conflicts.

In addition, the study would help bishops, pastors and students in theological seminaries and Bible schools in understanding and appreciating the importance of conflict transformation. It would also help bishops, pastors and other church leaders to realize that leadership conflicts ought not to result in church splits, animosity between leaders and ugly court battles but should be addressed in a transformative way so that the unity of the body of Christ is upheld. Finally, the study is an eye opener and a “wake up call” to the church to become intentional with regard to growing a culture of peace through training of both its leaders and members to approach conflicts biblically.

Scope of the Study

Conflicts have always existed where there are human relationships. They occur in families, workplaces, political parties, government departments, hospitals, private companies, churches, among others. Despite conflicts being so prevalent among the church members, this study only investigated conflicts among church leaders. In addition, the study was only limited to selected Pentecostal churches within Nairobi that have successfully navigated through leadership conflicts. The selected church leaders were exemplary bishops and pastors who have

attained some wealth of experience in navigating through leadership conflicts. This combination was critical in enabling the study to comprehensively investigate the major factors that contribute to conflicts among church leaders and how to transform them effectively.

Delimitations and Limitations

The study focused on one area, Nairobi. As such, the data collected may not be representative of other cities and rural areas. In addition, only bishops and pastors from selected Pentecostal churches who had successfully navigated through leadership conflicts were researched. Implications of the research for effective transformation of leadership conflicts in other Protestant churches or Catholic churches may not be revealed by the results of this study.

The study was limited to effective transformation of leadership conflicts within selected Pentecostal churches in Nairobi. Since, there was no readily available data related to leadership conflicts in Pentecostal churches that the researcher could rely on, this presented a major limitation to this study. The Pentecostal churches did not initially embrace scholarly pursuits. Consequently, there was very little documented scholarly work. As such, the researcher was left with only one option of going directly to the bishops and pastors to investigate the phenomenon.

Since the scope of this study remained within specific church leadership context, conflicts in other leadership contexts were not addressed by this research. Again, the research instruments might not have captured all factors concerned with effective conflict transformation in leadership settings. Due to time, logistical and financial constraints, the study was confined to a smaller sample of Pentecostal churches within Nairobi than would have been the desire of the researcher.

Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that the various respondents to the interviews and questionnaires were honest enough in their responses to the questions and interviews to generate a reliable data. In

spite of the fact that the study investigated only selected Pentecostal churches, the researcher assumed that the results from the research would have a wider application beyond the churches sampled. Despite the many leadership conflicts within the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi, the researcher assumed that positive examples of transformed leadership conflicts existed among them. The study further assumed that these positive examples would provide reliable and useful information to help other church leaders in the city of Nairobi and beyond. Finally, it was assumed that the researcher and the respondents' bias would not distort the results of the study.

Operational Definition of Terms

Conflict

According to Wolfgang Heinrich, "Conflict is a disruption of normal, desirable social interaction, a dysfunctional state of social relations."²² Whenever conflicts occur, people get hurt, become bitter, angry and defensive. However, a conflict can have either constructive or destructive consequences depending on how leaders handle it. Wolfgang Heinrich further conceptualizes conflict as, "Social relationship that is determined by a perceived and articulated contradiction about perceptions, judgments, and expectations."²³ This definition captures the three sides of any conflict namely conflict about facts, conflict of values and conflict of interests. In the context of this research, conflict among church leaders is defined as a sharp protracted disagreement or disharmony that disrupts the status quo and has the potential to escalate to violent confrontations.

Leadership

In the words of Peter Northouse, "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal."²⁴ According to Gary Yukl,

22. Wolfgang Heinrich, *Building the Peace: Experiences and Reflections of Collaborative Peace-building* (Uppsala: Life & Peace Institute, 2006), 3.

23. Ibid, 3.

24. Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership Theory and Practice* (New Delhi: Sage, 2003), 2.

“Leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives.”²⁵ In the context of this research, and in consonance with the position espoused by the academic field of leadership, in this study, the term “leadership” will refer to the process while “leaders” will refer to the people. Even though the two scholars view leadership as a process, this study prefers and adopts Gary Yukl’s definition due to its comprehensive nature and relevance to this study.

Pentecostal Churches

According to Wayne Grudem, “Pentecostal refers to any denomination or group that traces its historical origin back to the Pentecostal revival that began in the United States in 1901 and that holds to the doctrinal positions: (a) that baptism in the Holy Spirit is ordinarily an event subsequent to conversion, and (b) that baptism in the Holy Spirit is made evident by the sign of speaking in tongues, and (c) that all the spiritual gifts mentioned in the NT are to be sought and used today.”²⁶ In the context of this research, Pentecostal churches refer to any church group that believes in the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in new tongues and today’s use of all the spiritual gifts mentioned in the New Testament.

25. Gary Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2002), 8.

26. Wayne Grudem, 763.

Conceptual Framework

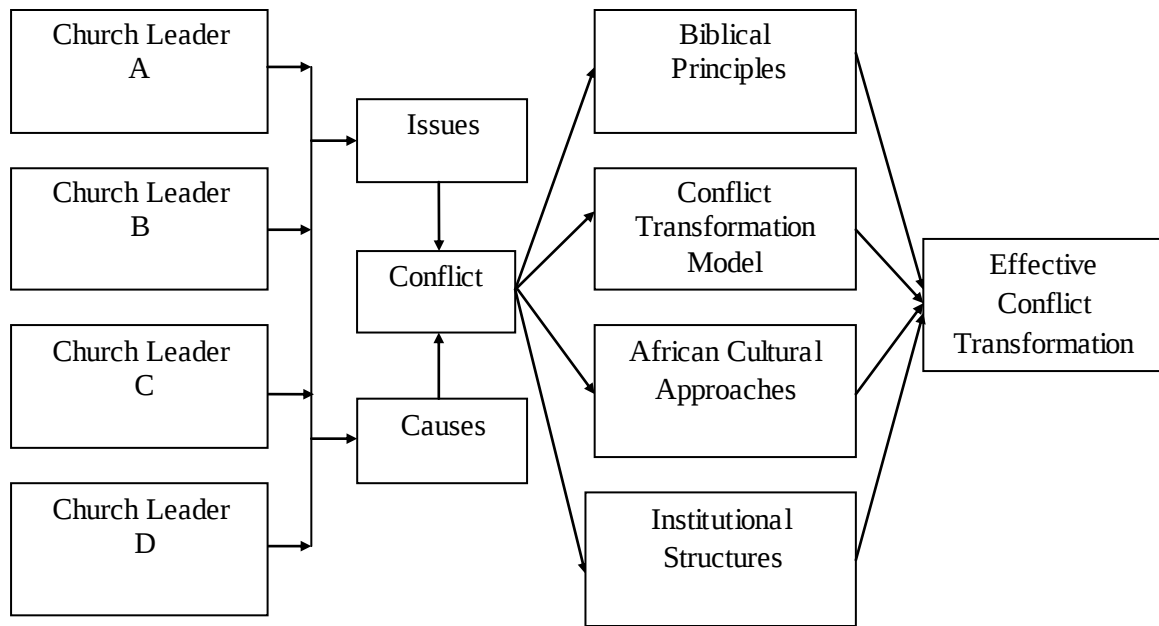


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework
Source: Author, 2015

Independent
Variables

Dependent
Variable

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the review of the relevant literature with respect to the study topic. In Ecclesiastes 3:15, the Bible says “Whatever is has already been, and what will be has been before” (NIV). Precisely, there is no new thing on the face of the earth. Since the study wasn’t “re-inventing the wheel,” the researcher consulted the relevant scholarly literature in order to understand and investigate the research problem. In addition to exploring what has already been published on the study topic by accredited scholars, the researcher also critiqued the materials.

The Major Causes of Conflicts

Antony D’ Souza has identified six major causes of conflicts. These are: “Perceptual differences, priority or value differences, different expectations or role pressures, divergent goals, self-esteem or status threat and personality clashes.”²⁷ The researcher will discuss each in turn. In addition, he will also discuss James’ perspective.

Perceptual Differences

It’s a fact of life that people see the world differently. D’ Souza observes, “People act on the basis of their perceptions of reality, which may not be reality itself.”²⁸ For instance, let’s examine a case of a Somali man walking in the streets of Nairobi. Whereas a Muslim will see a fellow brother, an ordinary Nairobiian may see a potential terrorist. A pastor will perhaps see a non-believer who needs a savior. To a street beggar, the man is a potential donor while to a job seeker, the man could be a potential employer. As such, people’s perceptions are different since our experiences limit our perceptions.

27. Anthony D’Souza, *Leadership: A Trilogy on Leadership and Effective Management* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1994), 311.

28. Ibid, 311.

Antony D' Souza further observes, "Every one's perceptions act as unique and individual filters through which they translate everything into subjective reality."²⁹ Since no two individuals perceive reality identically, conflicts are bound to erupt. In a church context, leadership conflicts may occur when two or more church leaders perceive a given phenomenon differently. For instance, a church elder approaching the pastor's office may perceive the commotion he heard in the office to point to the pastor's illicit advances towards a female counselee. To another, it may point to a prayer activity that was in progress. These different perceptions create misunderstandings which in turn constitute a major source of conflicts.

Priority or Value Differences

Differences in priorities or value systems are a major cause of conflicts. Precisely, values are deeply held beliefs. Ordinarily, people subscribe to different belief systems. Values shape people's perspectives, attitudes and viewpoints. According to D' Souza, "Value conflicts arise over differences in religious, moral, ideological or philosophical outlooks."³⁰ Whenever values are challenged, people tend to turn emotional.

In Acts 15:36-39, the Bible records a conflict between Paul and Barnabas revolving around the case of John Mark. Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them as they had before, but Paul was of a different opinion. According to Morrison and Mwalw'a, "This difference of opinion was caused by differing priorities that escalated to the point where they went their separate ways."³¹ To Paul, the priority was faithfulness and loyalty to the team in which case John Mark was found wanting since he had deserted them on the first trip. To Barnabas, the priority rested on reconciliation and restoration. In the words of Morrison and Mwalw'a, "Both

29. Ibid, 311.

30. Ibid, 312.

31. Philip Morrison and Chris Mwalw'a, *Conflict Resolution in the Church* (India: Oasis International Limited, 2013), 7.

stressed the importance of their values very strongly, which turned into a sharp conflict between them.”³²

About ten years ago, the senior pastor of a mega Pentecostal church in Nairobi’s Umoja II estate differed with his deputy over a financial donation that had been given by a friendly church from the U.S.A. The two pastors could not simply agree on how to allocate the funds due to differences in priorities. The senior pastor wanted to purchase a personal property while his deputy felt the money ought to be used to advance God’s work in the church. This led to a sharp disagreement which eventually made the deputy senior pastor to quit and start his own church. He accused the senior pastor of misplaced priorities.

Ideological differences can also be a source of conflicts in the church. Recently, the Archbishop of a big Pentecostal denomination with its headquarters in Nairobi relieved the presiding bishop of his responsibilities because the pastors perceived him as a dictator. A leadership conflict had ensued with the pastors dissatisfied with his leadership imploring the Archbishop to intervene. Coming from the previous bishop’s leadership style which was basically “hands-off,” the pastors found dictatorial leadership style quite unbearable.

Throughout church history, theological differences have been a major source of conflicts leading to church schisms and splits. The conflict leading to the famous Protestant Reformation movement in the sixteenth century was primarily theological. The man at the centre of this movement was Martin Luther. According to Mark Noll, “It was only when Luther began to protest against current church practices, which he thought obscured the free gift of grace to be found through faith in Christ, that his private discoveries led to public antagonism.”³³ His new found theological convictions led him to challenge the papal tyranny and ecclesiastical abuses. This caused a phenomenal ecclesiastical commotion and unrest that eventually led to the great church schism resulting in the Protestant church.

32. Ibid, 7.

33. Mark Noll, 160.

Different Expectations or Role Pressures

As people interact in normal life, expectations are created. However, when these expectations are not met, conflicts may easily erupt. D' Souza says, "Clues that reveal the expectations come out in statements such as, 'I wanted you to ...' and 'I expected you to ...'"³⁴ Last year, a resourceful church leader quit a medium sized Pentecostal church in Nairobi's Umoja II estate because the bishop failed to fully support the funeral arrangements of a relative of the church leader who had died. As such, the church leader's expectations were not met leading to a conflict. The church also has a history of other leaders who quit simply because the bishop didn't give them the support they expected during the preparation for their weddings.

Divergent Goals

Divergence in goals is a major cause of conflicts in churches. Different church departments pulling in different directions can easily create tensions in the church. This is so especially when there is competition among departmental leaders for available resources. For instance, a conflict may arise between the pastor in-charge of discipleship and the pastor in-charge of the building project over who should get more allocation of resources in their department. This is prominent in church contexts where pastors work for personal goals rather than striving to realize the corporate church goals. D' Souza admits, "The lack of team effort can develop into enormous conflict situations."³⁵

Self-esteem or Status Threat

Conflicts of this nature occur in church contexts where the senior pastor acts and behaves as if he knows everything. Some Pentecostal churches in Nairobi are well known for having senior pastors who hardly take opinions from the other church leaders. According to them, questioning their actions or decisions amounts to disrespect. As such, the other leaders, however

34. Antony D, Souza, 313.

35. Ibid, 313.

good their ideas are suffer in silence because of the ego and self-esteem of the senior pastor. Such a scenario becomes a fertile ground for breeding leadership conflicts. In the words of D' Souza, "Status and authority become sources of anger and frustration in such situations."³⁶

Personality Clashes

Personality differences are also a major source of conflicts. D' Souza puts it this way, "The idea that conflict comes about because of personality clashes conveniently describes the conflict people experience."³⁷ Some people are just difficult to get along with. Because of their hostile natures, they tend to incline toward conflict. Psychologists have identified four main personality types namely choleric, sanguine, melancholy and phlegmatic.

Cholerics are well known for their bullying tendencies. If for whatever reasons the church leadership team is mainly composed of cholerics, they would more likely tend to clash most of the times they hold a sitting. Impatient senior pastors may react by firing such cholerics from the leadership team and risk splitting the church.

Preferential Treatment

In Acts 6:1, the NIV Bible records, "In those days when the number of disciples was increasing the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food." This conflict between the Grecian Jews and the Hebraic Jews was caused by preferential treatment. There is a big debate as to whether this action was accidental or intentional. However, as Morrison and Mwalw'a observe, "... it does seem strange that while 'someone's needs would be overlooked' it was only the Grecian widows who experienced the oversight."³⁸

36. Ibid, 313.

37. Ibid, 314.

38. Morrison and Mwalw'a, 3.

Preferential treatment informed by ethnicity and nepotism is one of the major causes of conflicts in the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi. Morrison and Mwalw'a note, "I'm aware of churches where, year after year, the church leaders are chosen from the majority tribe even though there are godly and spiritually qualified members from other tribes."³⁹ Such preferential treatment would more likely strain the relationships in the church leading to leadership conflicts.

Daystar University's survey on Nairobi churches noted, "With the exception of some of the largest, upper-class churches (e.g. Nairobi Baptist, All Saints Cathedral, St. Andrews and Valley Road Pentecostal), most Nairobi churches are comprised of people from one or two ethnic groups."⁴⁰ Interestingly, among the small Pentecostal churches in Nairobi, there is a tendency to have the bigger percentage of the congregants coming from the senior pastor's ethnic group. As such, preferential treatment would more likely occur in such contexts with the majority ethnic group antagonizing and forcing its will on the minority groups.

James' Perspective

In his letter to the twelve tribes scattered among the nations, James opens his chapter four by asking the question: "What causes fights and quarrels among you?" (James 4:1, NIV). In an attempt to respond to this question, Ken Sande identifies four primary causes of conflict. He says:

Some disputes arise because of misunderstandings resulting from poor communication (See Josh. 22:10 - 34). Differences in values, goals, gifts, calling, priorities, expectations, interests, or opinions can also lead to conflict (See Acts 15:30; 1 Cor. 12:12-31). Competition over limited resources, such as time or money, is a frequent source of disputes in families, churches, and businesses (See Gen. 13:1-12) ... Many conflicts are caused or aggravated by sinful attitudes and habits that lead to sinful words and actions (see James 4:1-2).⁴¹

It is a fact of life that God created us unique and different. We have differences in opinions, convictions, feelings, desires, viewpoints, perspectives and priorities. As Ken Sande

39. Ibid, 2.

40. Daystar University, 71.

41. Ken Sande, 30.

puts it, “Many of these differences are not inherently right or wrong; they are simply the result of God-given diversity and personal preferences (See 1Cor. 12:21-31).”⁴² When this diversity is handled properly, it has the potential of producing positive change. This is perhaps the rationale behind the view that considers conflicts as a catalyst of social change. Critically evaluated, Ken Sande’s four primary causes of conflicts don’t significantly differ from Anthony D’ Souza’s. However, Sande builds his argument from James’ epistle.

In his response to the question he posed earlier, James answers by asking another question: “Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you?” In this verse, he singles out “desires that battle within” as a major causal factor of conflicts. According to him, coveting, quarreling, fighting and killing are all actions rooted in sin. As such, drawing from his argument, it is quite evident that most of the conflicts emanate from sinful attitudes and behavior. Ultimately, sin is the prime cause of all conflicts according to James’ perspective.

The Dynamics and Progression of Conflict

While some look at conflicts as a normal condition of human existence, others on the same line of thought maintain that conflicts are and will remain part of human existence. According to Anthony D’Souza, “The presence of conflict in an organization indicates members are involved in something of sufficient importance that they face the tensions conflict inevitably brings.”⁴³ To him, conflicts are more of a sign of a group’s health than a symptom of disease. As such, conflicts are inherent in vibrant organizations.

In a sense, this argument has merit given that in leadership contexts where nothing important enough to make leaders fight happens, there is a high chance of that organization dying. Viewed from that vantage point, conflicts are a sign of vibrant healthy organizations. As a matter of fact, sociologists view conflicts as catalysts of social change. The researcher therefore

42. Ibid, 30.

43. Anthony D’Souza, 305.

upholds the view that a conflict among church leaders can have either constructive or destructive consequences depending on how they handle it.

By nature conflicts are never static. According to John Lederach, “It is expressive, dynamic, and dialectical in nature.”⁴⁴ Louis Kriesberg who views conflicts as generally fluid points out that, “... they move through a series of stages as conflicts emerge, escalate, de-escalate and are settled.”⁴⁵ As such, conflicts can be studied from a scientific point of view. It is possible to establish the characteristics of a conflict irrespective of the context in which it occurs and the patterns that it follows. For instance, scholars and researchers have established that conflicts move along a continuum. As such, examining a conflict’s longitudinal progression is helpful in determining the appropriate approach.

It is in the light of this understanding that John Lederach asserts, “It is through this exploration that researchers have identified the life cycle or progression of conflict.”⁴⁶ This has great implications on conflict transformation and peace-building processes. Lederach maintains that “... understanding conflict as progression reinforces the idea that peace-building involves much more than the achievement of a cease-fire or the conduct of negotiations.”⁴⁷

Wolfgang Heinrich’s argument is not any different from Lederach’s. He points out that “Conflict researchers have identified three main phases of conflict: articulation of tensions, escalation into violent confrontation and cessation of hostilities.”⁴⁸ However, Jay Rothman begs to differ with Heinrich and instead proposes four main phases namely antagonism, resonance, invention and action. Although Rothman’s focus was on conflict in divided societies, but his schema seems to apply in interpersonal conflict as well. As such, the researcher leans more on

44. John P. Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1997), 63.

45. Louis Kriesberg, 52.

46. John P. Lederach, 64.

47. Ibid, 71.

48. Wolfgang Heinrich, 7.

the argument of Jay Rothman because it offers a more comprehensive and elaborate description of the progression of conflict.

The antagonism phase is the process of surfacing differences and analyzing animosity. At this phase, the questions “who wants what?” and “what is the problem here?” feature significantly. The resonance phase is the process of articulating common needs and motivations. At this phase, the parties begin to talk about themselves. Invention is the phase where the process of generating cooperative solutions and building peace occurs. At the action phase, which is the final phase according to Jay Rothman, the process of setting practical joint agendas and action plans take place. The questions “what is to be done?” and “who is to do it?” feature significantly at this phase. As such, an understanding of the four phases of conflict progression would more likely prepare the Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi to navigate successfully through the leadership conflicts.

Models of Conflict Approaches

This study will discuss five models of conflict approaches namely conflict management model, conflict resolution model, conflict transformation model, African cultural approach and Biblical principles.

Conflict Management Model

Conflict management model was introduced in the 1970s. Bloomfield and Reilly define it as “The positive and constructive handling of differences and divergence.”⁴⁹ Neufeldt and Fast et al understand it as, “Any efforts made to contain violent conflict, reduce the levels of violence, or engage parties in a process to settle the conflict.”⁵⁰ The proponents of this view advocate for merely managing the conflict. Influenced by their worldview that holds that

49. www.idea.int/publications/democracy-and-deep-rooted-conflict/upload/chapter-1.pdf, p.18 accessed 11/20/2014.

50. Reina Neufeldt and Larissa Fast et al, *Peace-building: A Caritas Training Manual* (Vatican City: Caritas Internationalis, 2002), 14.

conflicts are natural elements of human relationships and can be managed, they consider resolving conflicts as quite unrealistic.

This is evident from the words of Bloomfield and Reilly that, “Rather than advocating methods of removing conflict [it] addresses the more realistic question of managing conflict: how to deal with it in a constructive way, how to bring opposing sides together in a cooperative process, how to design a practical, achievable, cooperative system for the constructive management.” According to Wolfgang Heinrich, “This concept builds on the assumption that conflict evolves and develops along certain, predictable patterns and dynamics which can be understood and regulated.”⁵¹ In the opinion of the researcher, this argument is however self limiting given that human action and interaction is difficult to manage. As such, since the approach was based on weak premises, the conclusions drawn had corresponding short-comings.

Wolfgang Heinrich admits this weakness and says, “The concept of conflict management narrows the focus too much on the technical aspects and the practical side of dealing with conflict, emphasizing skills and methods, but does not adequately capture the procedural nature of peace-building.”⁵² As such, conflict management model deals with only the surface issues at the expense of the substantive issues. This weakness perhaps explains why scholars in this field have moved away from this approach.

If conflict management as an approach is applied to the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi, the leadership conflicts will simply be managed and not resolved or transformed. Since the approach views conflicts as a natural phenomenon in human relationships, it does not go beyond managing a conflict. The proponents of this view maintain that conflicts are and will remain part of human existence. It should however be pointed out that merely managing a leadership conflict in church may be a recipe for disaster. It is equivalent to managing the presenting

51. Wolfgang Heinrich, 4.

52. Ibid, 4.

symptoms of a chronic disease at the expense of treating it. The patient risks dying since nothing is being done to address the underlying substantive issues.

Recently, a leading Pentecostal denomination which is affectionately referred to as “mother denomination” by the rest of the Pentecostal denominations almost split right in the middle due to conflicts within its leadership circles. According to media reports, the conflicts threatening to bring this church denomination down have persisted for years. Whereas no study has yet been conducted to investigate the model of conflict approach which this church denomination has been employing, the media reports seem to point to a long time of managing the presenting symptoms of an ensuing leadership conflict until they exploded. As such, conflict management model is perhaps quite insufficient.

Conflict Resolution Model

Due to the above mentioned short-comings, the researchers and scholars moved from conflict management to conflict resolution model. In sharp contrast with conflict management, conflict resolution proponents maintain that people cannot compromise on their fundamental needs. As Hugh Miall puts it “Conflict resolution therefore emphasizes intervention by skilled but powerless third-parties working unofficially with the parties to foster new thinking and new relationships.”⁵³

It should however be noted that contrary to Hugh Miall’s argument, the model also includes intervention by skilled powerful third parties working officially as it is the case with litigation processes. These third-parties include negotiators, mediators, arbitrators, conciliators and litigation processes. The proponents of this position maintain that if parties can be helped to explore, analyze, engage, question and reframe their positions and interests, then they can resolve their conflicts.

53. Hugh Miall, “Conflict Transformation: A Multi-Dimensional Task” ‘IN’ *Berghof Research Centre for Constructive Conflict Management* (Aug. 2004):3.

As Wolfgang Heinrich correctly points out, contrary to the previous approach, conflict resolution “...emphasizes the need to understand the ‘root causes’ of conflict, how conflict evolves and ends.”⁵⁴ This approach is founded on the rationale that conflict is not only negative but also undesirable. As such, the approach insists on conflict elimination. It espouses the view that conflict has a final solution. In Wolfgang Heinrich’s own words, “This encourages approaches that primarily aim at stopping violent confrontation and reducing the overt expression of conflict.”⁵⁵ The five major approaches under this model are discussed below:

The first approach is negotiation. In the words of Ken Sande, “Negotiation is a personal bargaining process in which parties seek to reach a mutually agreeable settlement of their substantive differences.”⁵⁶ One can engage an attorney to act on their behalf or a professional to advise them. Alternatively, one can still represent himself. Researchers have found this process having several advantages over the others. According to Ken Sande, “It is usually faster, less expensive, and less time-consuming, and more private and flexible than arbitration or litigation”⁵⁷ However, the process can be biased and unjust especially when a more powerful person takes advantage of the weaker one. It may also have a cost implication especially when fully paid up attorneys are involved.

The second approach is mediation. According to Duane Elmer a mediator is “... a third person who acts as a middle person or intermediary between two opposing parties.”⁵⁸ Mediators are usually neutral and aim at facilitating communication and understanding between the two parties in conflict. Commenting on their role, Ken Sande points out that “A mediator helps the parties explore various solutions to their differences, but the parties retain control of the results and are not obligated to follow the mediator’s advice.”⁵⁹ A respected person from the

54. Wolfgang Heinrich, 4.

55. Ibid, 4.

56. Ken Sande, 270.

57. Ibid, 270.

58. Duane Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Conflict: Building Relationships for Effective Ministry* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 67.

59. Ken Sande, 271.

community, a neutral friend agreeable to both sides or a fully paid up professional can function as a mediator.

Researchers have over the years noted several advantages that go with this approach. First of all, unlike negotiation, it's very difficult for one party to take advantage of the other. It's also cheap and affordable. Ken Sande admits this fact and notes, "Because of its informal nature, mediation is relatively flexible, private, inexpensive, and time efficient."⁶⁰ Again, it ensures the parties in conflict retain their dignity as the matter is being addressed. As such, it is less likely to create enmity which eventually impacts negatively on the relationships.

However, mediation has a number of shortcomings. First, being a voluntary process, either party may decline to participate in the talks or opt out in-between. In such event, as Ken Sande observes, "The process may become deadlocked, thus wasting the previous investment in time and money."⁶¹ In addition to this, unless the results of the process are entrenched into a legal contract, the settlement is not legally enforceable. Another obvious short-coming is that if the mediator is a fully paid up professional, the cost will definitely go up. All in all, in spite of all these limitations, mediation as a process has high chances of striking an agreeable settlement that can end the conflict.

The third approach under conflict resolution model is arbitration. Arbitrators work more or less like judges in the sense that they gather evidence and issue a binding decision. Unlike negotiation or mediation, arbitration always produces a resolution to a conflict irrespective of the feelings of either party in conflict. As Ken Sande puts it, "In arbitration, the parties agree to present each side of their dispute before one or more neutral arbitrators and, in most cases, to be legally bound by the arbitrator's decision on the matter."⁶² An arbitrator may be a trained professional or simply a volunteer. In arbitration, the parties in conflict are allowed to choose

60. Ibid, 271.

61. Ibid, 271.

62. Ibid, 271.

their own arbitrators. However, unlike negotiation, arbitration does not allow free flow of communication between the parties in conflict.

Arbitration carries the notorious disadvantage of imposing resolutions on the parties in conflict whether they like it or not. This can impact negatively on the relationships of the parties involved. Ken Sande upholds this view and notes, “The primary disadvantage of arbitration is that relationship problems are ignored, which often perpetuates or aggravates personal estrangement.”⁶³ Again, in the event that one party declines to abide by the decision rendered by the arbitrators, the matter still ends up in court. As such, the process isn’t water tight.

The fourth approach is litigation. This approach is perhaps the most notorious in terms of damaging the relationships of the parties involved. According to Ken Sande, “Litigation utilizes the judges, juries, and procedural rules of the civil court system.”⁶⁴ Since courts have authority to summon all parties to appear and to abide by the decisions of the court, litigation enjoys many advantages over the other processes. The rulings are usually public and to some extent can be predicted.

However, litigation has many disadvantages: First and foremost, it is costly especially when parties have to hire advocates to represent them. In most cases, courts take an unnecessarily long time to give a ruling on a given matter. Again, as Ken Sande observes, “In addition to being expensive and time-consuming, litigation is constrained by formal procedures, encourages public attention, offers limited remedies (usually money or injunctions), and often allows one party to win completely while the other party loses everything.”⁶⁵ As such, this process does not promote communication and understanding between the parties in conflict.

Researchers have also established that litigation simply compounds the conflict instead of resolving it. It hardly deals with the root causes of a conflict. According to Ken Sande, “A court

63. Ibid, 272.

64. Ibid, 272.

65. Ibid, 272.

is usually forced to deal with the symptoms of a problem rather than its real causes, leaving the parties in an ongoing state of antagonism.”⁶⁶ As such, litigation throws relationships into complete disarray and precipitates bitterness between the parties. This is perhaps why the Bible encourages Christians to settle their conflicts out of court.

Recently, the presiding bishop of the Living Water Family Church took the Archbishop of the Redeemed Gospel Church to a Nairobi court over a church plot tussle. Initially, they attempted negotiation where the said bishops personally represented themselves. When negotiation failed, some friendly bishops acceptable to both sides attempted to mediate the process with an aim of striking an agreeable settlement to end the conflict. Unfortunately, the talks collapsed half-way when one party declined to cede ground. The matter ended up in court. The relationship between the two bishops has been strained ever since.

The fifth approach is Christian conciliation. According to Ken Sande, “Christian conciliation is a process for reconciling persons and resolving disputes out of court in a biblically faithful manner.”⁶⁷ As the name suggests, this process is essentially conciliatory rather than adversarial in nature. It upholds the Biblical principles of reconciliation and forgiveness. Reconcilers approved by the church or even professional conciliators usually do the job. This process encourages sincere communication and honest handling of the substantive issues fueling the conflict. It is perhaps the best among the five approaches under conflict resolution model in terms of preserving the relationships of the parties in conflict.

Christian conciliation takes various forms. The parties in conflict can either be coached and left on their own to resolve the conflict in private or the conflict can be referred to biblical mediation. On biblical mediation, Ken Sande defines it as “A process in which one or more Christian conciliators meet with them to promote constructive dialogue and encourage a

66. Ibid, 272.

67. Ibid, 273.

voluntary and biblically faithful settlement of their personal and substantive differences.”⁶⁸ The process provides for biblical arbitration in the event that the above options fail. The difference between biblical arbitration and secular arbitration is that biblical arbitration always produces legally abiding decisions that are consistent with the Holy Scriptures. Again, the process is based on the biblical value system and lays major emphasis on preserving relationships of the parties in conflict.

Christian conciliation has many advantages: First of all, as Ken Sande observes, “It promotes traditional values, preserves relationships, encourages meaningful change, avoids negative publicity, provides a positive Christian witness, and is relatively inexpensive.”⁶⁹ Compared to litigation, it has more potential for creative remedies and also delivers fast results. It also functions in a Christian atmosphere of love and honesty.

In 1989, Bishop Evans Mrima, the renowned bishop of Gospel Outreach Church died in a grisly road accident. The succession battles among the top church leaders who were close to the bishop threw the church leadership into a conflict. Dr. Smith, a friend of the late Bishop Mrima from the U.S.A attempted several times to reconcile the warring church leaders. In closed door boardroom sittings, he sought to promote constructive dialogue and encourage a voluntary and biblically faithful settlement of their personal and substantive differences. This scenario clearly illustrates what Christian conciliatory approach is all about. Unfortunately, the process didn’t bear fruit and the mega church ended up splitting into various factions.

A major setback with this process is that Christian conciliators don’t have the same authority as civil judges. As such, their decisions are not legally enforceable. All in all, as Ken Sande captures in his final thoughts, “In spite of these limitations, Christian conciliation usually provides more thorough and satisfying solutions to conflict than can be obtained through secular

68. Ibid, 273.

69. Ibid, 273.

processes.”⁷⁰ It is the only process that prioritizes relationships of the parties in conflict. Among the five approaches under conflict resolution model, Christian conciliation is the closest in approach to the conflict transformation model this study argues for.

Despite the conflict resolution model’s popularity and wide circulation, just like the conflict management model, it was also found to have various short-comings. Critics of this model point to its weakness in preserving the relationships of the parties involved after the conflict has been resolved. Consequently, a recent more holistic perception and approach to conflict was introduced to bridge the gaps. This new integrative approach is what has come to be referred to as conflict transformation model.

Conflict Transformation Model

Conflict transformation is the most recent approach in addressing conflicts. Credit goes to John P. Lederach and the Mennonite Conciliation Center for inventing this new approach. In this new integrative approach, conflict is no longer managed or resolved but transformed. Unlike conflict resolution which addresses the issue but may fall short of restoring relationships and promoting growth, conflict transformation not only focuses on resolving the conflict but also deals with the deeper concerns of both the issues and relationships involved, bringing resolution, healing and even a better way forward than what was existing before the conflict.

Hugh Miall views this new approach as “A process of engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourses, and, if necessary, the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflict.”⁷¹ As such, this approach diverts from the route of mediation of outsiders and focuses on supporting groups within the society in conflict. Thus, peace must be “grown” from within and not “enforced” from outside. This radical departure from the previous approaches places Lederach’s new model above the rest.

70. Ibid, 273.

71. Hugh Miall, 3.

Louis Kriesberg correctly points out, “Conflict transformation as a reality has existed throughout human history, but as a field of study and practice it emerged only in the early 1990s.”⁷² This is true owing to the fact that conflicts abound in all human relations. He further notes, “The field incorporates some of the core ideas of the contemporary conflict resolution approach, but it focuses attention on a large-scale, protracted and destructive conflicts and how they change so that they are conducted constructively, in large measure.”⁷³ As such, conflict transformation as a model of conflict approach ought to be viewed in the broader context.

Peace-building which is an integral part of this approach is seen as a structure-process. As such, the relational aspects of conflict are so crucial. It is this focus on the relationships that makes this new approach distinct from the other two. Poor relationships between groups have been known to trigger conflicts and hinder peace-building efforts after the violence is over. That’s why a focus on preserving relationships is critical to this approach.

As it is the practice in the academic circles where new models are not necessarily new but just an improvement of previous models, the conflict transformation model cannot be said to be an exception. However, the holistic principles and assumptions upon which this new approach is based present it as a distinctively new approach. According to Wolfgang Heinrich, this approach is based on the following assumptions:

Conflict is a common and natural experience in all relationships and cultures. It is a socially-constructed cultural event, which does not just happen, people are active participants. It emerges through interactive processes based on the search for and creation of shared meaning. The interactive processes accomplished through and rooted in people’s perceptions, interpretations, expressions, and intentions. Meaning is found as people locate themselves and social things in their accumulated knowledge; a person’s common sense and accumulated experience and knowledge are the primary basis of how they create, understand, and respond to conflict. Culture is rooted in the shared knowledge, created and used by a set of people for perceiving, expressing, and responding to social realities around them.⁷⁴

72. Louis Kriesberg, 50.

73. Ibid, 50.

74. Wolfgang Heinrich, 16 -17.

Conflict transformation is therefore an integrative holistic model that includes leadership at the various levels of society in peace-building and reconciliation processes. As such, the top level, middle level and the grass roots leadership work together to transform the conflicts. This model identifies the top level leadership as quite powerful, influential, authoritative and capable of enforcing a settlement. It also identifies the middle level leadership as capable of accessing both the top and grassroots leadership.

In a societal setting, the grassroots level is comprised of people who ordinarily struggle for basic necessities of life such as food, clothing, shelter and safety. In the words of Wolfgang Heinrich, “Leadership at this level includes traditional community leaders such as chiefs, elders, and religious leaders ... women’s groups, youth groups, professional associations or individuals, such as teachers, health workers, etc.”⁷⁵ As such, the rationale behind this model is simply inclusivity. Thus, if a conflict has to be transformed and a sustainable integrative peace-building process initiated, then leadership from all levels must be mobilized. Wolfgang Heinrich captures the summary of this new approach as follows:

The central concern of “conflict transformation” and “peace-building” approaches is not to search for “solutions” but to initiate processes within the society affected by conflict and to empower actors within that society to become the owners of the peace process. The underlying guiding principle is that peace cannot be enforced from the outside. Peace must grow from the inside if it is to be sustainable.⁷⁶

Conflict transformation model is not interested in simply managing the conflict or quick-fix “solutions” or “settlements” but embarks on processes within the people in a conflict situation geared towards equipping the leadership right from the top to the grass root, to become architects and engineers of the peace process. Current scholarship on conflicts approaches and peace-building processes favors this new approach because it brings everybody on board. John Lederach’s principle that peace cannot be enforced from the outside but it must be “grown” from

75. Ibid, 16.

76. Ibid, 18.

inside is not only practical but also realistic. This is the conflict approach model the researcher espouses and will be arguing for.

Critics have not spared Lederach's conflict transformation model. They point out that despite the approach being new, conflict transformation cannot be said to be absolutely different from conflict management and conflict resolution. Their main contention is that the new model draws on many of the familiar concepts of conflict management and conflict resolution. Hugh Miall captures the argument more correctly and suggests, "It is best viewed not as a wholly new approach, but rather as a re-conceptualization of the field in order to make it more relevant to contemporary conflicts."⁷⁷ As such, conflict transformation model can best be viewed as simply an advancement of the previous approaches. This makes sense given that more recent stronger models in any field of study ordinarily build on the strengths of the previous models and minimize on their weaknesses.

The three models notably articulate varying approaches to conflict intervention. However, conflict transformation model stands up to be distinct and broader in approach. This study will borrow Lederach's conflict transformation model and apply it in addressing conflicts among Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi. Since Lederach's conflict transformation model was formulated with "nations in a conflict situation" in mind and not "church leaders in a conflict situation" in mind, the study will contextualize the model and apply it in a church setting. This is workable and in line with Wolfgang Heinrich's observation that, "The advantage of this approach is its general applicability and pragmatism."⁷⁸ Precisely, the principle underlying Lederach's model is applicable across various conflict situation settings.

As such, in the context of this study, the bishops will form the top level leadership, the pastors and church elders will form the middle level leadership while the congregants will form the grass-root level leadership. Conflict transformation and peace-building processes will then

77. Hugh Miall, 3.

78. Wolfgang Heinrich, 18.

target to bring the three levels of leadership on board. When applied in a church context, Lederach's model will seek to enhance "growing peace" from inside the church as opposed to "enforcing" it from outside.

As earlier observed, peace-building and reconciliation are integral parts of the conflict transformation model. By making reference to Psalm 85:10, John P. Lederach explores an interesting puzzle with regard to the concepts of truth, mercy, justice and peace as used in this context. According to him, "In two short lines at the heart of the text (85:10), the Spanish version of the Bible reads (in translation), 'Truth and mercy have met together; peace and justice have kissed.'⁷⁹ As such, these four concepts are very crucial in the process of conflict transformation.

To begin with, truth brings out openly what really happened during the conflict and lays bare the facts of the matter. In the words of Lederach, "Truth is the longing for acknowledgement of wrong and the validation of painful loss and experiences, but it is coupled with Mercy, which articulates the need for acceptance, letting go, and a new beginning."⁸⁰ As a matter of fact, mercy focuses on people's relationships. It espouses acceptance, compassion, forgiveness, support and new start. It carries the idea of grace. John Lederach further observes, "Without compassion and forgiveness, healing and restoration would be out of the question."⁸¹ By nature, justice investigates the root causes of conflicts. It looks beyond the presenting issues to unearth the substantive issues with an aim of making sure that the perpetrators of the conflicts are brought to book.

According to John Lederach, "Justice represents the search for individual and group rights, for social restructuring, and for restitution, but it is linked with peace, which underscores

79. John P. Lederach, 28.

80. Ibid, 29.

81. Ibid, 28.

the need for interdependence, well-being, and security.”⁸² As such, justice fights to restore the damage wreaked on the victims. However, can there be peace without justice? This question has boggled the minds of many researchers and people executing peace initiatives. Peace is what holds a church together. Without it, truth cannot be heard and justice cannot be fully embodied. In John Lederach’s own words, without peace “...there is no respite from the vicious cycle of accusation, bitterness, and bloodshed.”⁸³ As such, this perspective holds truth, justice, mercy and peace in creative tension.

Drawing from the core concepts in the Psalmist’s paradoxes, there is a place where the four meet. That meeting place, in the words of John Lederach is “...reconciliation.”⁸⁴ As such, reconciliation focuses on building relationships between antagonists. John Lederach further notes, “Psalm 85 reiterates the understanding that reconciliation is both a place we are trying to reach and a journey that must be taken up.”⁸⁵ It is not only a social space but also a locus, a place where people and things come together.

By allowing truth, mercy, justice and peace to come together into a common locus, this model proposes that conflict transformation and reconciliation can be arrived at. As previously observed, reconciliation is both a place we are trying to reach and a journey that must be taken up. As such, the Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi should not shy off from facing the naked facts of the leadership conflicts. The substantive issues of the conflicts ought to be tabled openly. At the same time, they should extend mercy and grace to each other aimed at preserving the relationships between them. This is because without compassion and forgiveness, healing and restoration cannot be achieved.

A conflict approach that leaves behind strained relationships where bishops cannot see eye to an eye as it is the case with the Archbishop of the Redeemed Gospel Church and the

82. Ibid, 29.

83. John P. Lederach, “The Meeting Place” ‘IN’ *Journey Towards Reconciliation* (Spring, 1998):5.

84. Ibid, 29.

85. Ibid, 6.

presiding bishop of Jesus Celebration Centre cannot be said to be transformative. As justice is done to restore the damage wreaked on the victims and the downtrodden, peace must be maintained. It is peace that holds the church together and would more likely prevent it from splitting. In a church context where conflict transformation model is applied to address conflicts among leaders, the conflicts will not only be resolved but also the deeper concerns of both the issues and relationships involved will be dealt with amicably. Perhaps, this model of conflict approach is what the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi need to explore.

African Cultural Approaches

The arrival of European missionaries in Africa in the past centuries created a scenario where everything to do with African culture was treated as evil. The white missionaries refused to acknowledge the worth of traditional African cultural practices. Because of the assumed superiority of the Western culture, they did not bother to find out African religious ideas and thought forms and practices of the African peoples. However, recent studies have shown that Africa's rich cultural heritage had and still has a lot to offer in addressing conflicts and the problems of humanity.

Even though the researcher has found no specific documented scholarly model of addressing conflicts from the African cultural context, studies that have been carried out on African cultural values reveal elements of the earlier discussed models therein. Interestingly, the African cultural approach to addressing conflicts was relationship oriented.

According to Laurenti Magesa, "Relationships receive the most attention in the adjudication of what is good and bad, what is desirable and undesirable in life."⁸⁶ As such, it may be correctly argued that John Paul Lederach's conflict transformation model which deals with the deeper concerns of both the issues and relationships involved is not anything entirely new but a re-conceptualization and polishing of what used to happen on the African soil.

86. Laurenti Magesa, *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 1998), 65.

Pre-colonial African societies were primarily family based. Most of the societies were ruled by powerful chiefs who relied heavily on the collective advice of the council of elders which drew its membership from the senior members of the community. Decision making was by consensus reached through negotiation as opposed to voting which is purely a Western idea. The societies had strong and effective institutional structures that helped to successfully navigate through conflicts.

Whereas the West espoused individualism informed by Rene Descartes' philosophy "I think, therefore I am," Africa remained glued to communal relationships informed by the Ubuntu philosophy "I am because we are and, since we are, therefore I am." The idea that a person is a person through other persons and that we cannot be ourselves without community was deeply ingrained in them. As a matter of fact, it informed their worldview. Ubuntu provides us with a good example of the African cultural approach in addressing conflicts. There is consensus among the scholars that Ubuntu is a difficult concept to define. According to Anderson:

Ubuntu (a Zulu word) is a lifestyle or unifying world-view (or philosophy) of African societies based on respect and understanding between individuals. Ubuntu has been translated as "humaneness", and is derived from the expression: umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu [a person is a person because of other people / a person can only be a person through others]. It envelops values of group solidarity, compassion, respect, human dignity, conformity to basic norms and collective unity.⁸⁷

Ubuntu philosophy spread in diverse forms across many societies throughout the pre-colonial Africa. In the words of Timothy Murithi, "More specifically among the languages of East, Central and Southern Africa the concept of Ubuntu is a cultural world-view that tries to capture the essence of what it means to be human."⁸⁸ Precisely, the Ubuntu concept is what informed the mode of addressing conflicts in the pre-colonial African societies. As such, basic respect and compassion for others was upheld.

Ubuntu societies held dearly the idea of communal life. Relationships were held in high esteem. As such, the context itself facilitated successful addressing of conflicts. Conflicts were

87. www.isrc.org/Papers/Anderson.pdf p.9, accessed on 4/21/2015

88. Timothy Murithi, "Practical Peacemaking Wisdom from Africa: Reflections on Ubuntu" 'IN' *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, Vol. 1, no. 4 (June, 2006): 25-34.

not viewed as individual affairs but a concern for the whole community. Due to the dynamics of group identity, whenever an individual was wronged, it was in effect a wrong to his or her group. As such, the elders from both sides of the accuser and the accused would hold sittings to address the conflict. Conflicts were addressed at the levels of the family, village, inter-ethnic group, or even between different ethnic nations within the same locality. As such, conflict transformation and peace-building was achieved through the principles of reciprocity, inclusivity informed by a sense of humaneness.

Among the Xhosa of South Africa, disputes were resolved through an institution known as the Inkundla / Lekgotla. This was in effect a group mediation and reconciliation forum. The proceedings would be led by a council of elders and the chief. However, if the disputes were larger, the matter would be referred to the chief. The family members of both the accuser and the accused were part of the process of ascertaining wrong doing and finding a resolution. The council of elders acting as an intermediary not only carried out investigations but also advised and made recommendations to the chief.

The overall goal was to address the matter in a way that promoted reconciliation, peace, forgiveness and healing of relationships between the aggrieved parties. The process embraced consensus building as a cultural pillar. This way, the society remained cohesive. Timothy Murithi admits this fact and notes, “Ubuntu societies developed mechanisms for resolving disputes and promoting reconciliation with a view to healing past wrongs and maintaining social cohesion and harmony.”⁸⁹ As such, this clearly brings out the similarities between John Lederach’s conflict transformation model and the Ubuntu concept. Both focus on relationships.

However much effective a model of addressing conflicts is, if it does not meet strong institutional structures, it would most likely fail. As earlier observed, the pre-colonial African societies had working institutions. In responding to the Xhosa’s process of addressing conflicts, Timothy Murithi notes:

89. Ibid, 25-34.

The actual process involved five key stages: first, after a fact-finding process where the views of victims, perpetrators and witnesses were heard, the perpetrators - if considered to have done wrong - would be encouraged, both by the Council and other community members in the Inkundla/Lekgotla forum, to acknowledge responsibility or guilt secondly, perpetrators would be encouraged to demonstrate genuine remorse or to repent thirdly, perpetrators would be encouraged to ask for forgiveness and victims in their turn would be encouraged to show mercy; fourth, where possible and at the suggestion of the Council of Elders, perpetrators would be required to pay an appropriate compensation or reparation for the wrong done. (This was often more symbolic than a re-payment in-kind, with the primary function of reinforcing the remorse of the perpetrators.) Amnesty could thus be granted, but not with impunity, and the fifth stage would seek to consolidate the whole process by encouraging the parties to commit themselves to reconciliation.⁹⁰

A critical analysis of various African cultural approaches in addressing conflicts reveals that in most instances, once the matter was settled, the offended person would respond with a certain gesture signifying that he or she no longer held any offense in his or her heart and both the offender and the offended person would greet each other to signify the restoration of peace and reconciliation between them.

Commenting on the practice among the Lozi people, Magesa notes, "The Lozi,...disapprove of any irremediable breaking of relationships."⁹¹ As such, for the Lozi people, relationships are a supreme value. Even when the matter would be taken to the community judges for a hearing, the judges conducted the process in a manner that safeguarded the relationships of the parties involved. As Magesa puts it, "Judgments are intended to be both conciliatory and therapeutic."⁹²

Among the Gbaya people of Cameroon and the Central African Republic, the approach to conflicts was not very different. The Ubuntu worldview informed their approach. A critical analysis of the way they navigated through conflicts reveals a major emphasis on relationships. In order to safeguard the good relationships of the parties involved, a self-appointed mediator would volunteer to navigate the process of addressing the conflicts. He would oscillate between the perpetrator and the victim until a settlement was struck. According to Thomas Christensen:

90. Ibid, 25-34.

91. Laurenti Magesa, 240.

92. Ibid, 240.

The *wi-to-mboro* goes first to one person, then to the other, and when they have both calmed down, they greet each other in words like these: ‘Brother, the words that upset us are finished. I don’t hold any words in my heart against you. What you said made me angry, and we quarreled, but now it’s finished.’ Ideally, they would embrace, forget the matter and resume a normal relationship.⁹³

Ubuntu philosophy is very much applicable in today’s world. A good documented example of recent application of the Ubuntu philosophy is the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission which drew heavily upon some aspects of the African cultural values and attitudes to move the nation beyond its violent past. The chairman of the Commission, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the late former president Nelson Mandela are on record saying that without forgiveness, there would be no future for South Africa. Informed by the Ubuntu concept, the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission encouraged the perpetrators of violence to come out, confess their sins and openly ask for forgiveness.

Interestingly, the African approach to conflicts does not appear much different from the biblical approach. The African cultural approach began the process by a fact-finding process followed by acknowledgement of responsibility or guilt on the part of the perpetrator. Secondly, the perpetrator would demonstrate genuine remorse and repentance; thirdly, perpetrators would ask for forgiveness; fourth, perpetrators would compensate the victims and finally, the two parties would be encouraged to reconcile and move on. In Luke 17:3 (NIV), Jesus taught, “If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.” In both approaches, the value of acknowledging guilt and remorse and the granting of forgiveness as a way to achieve reconciliation is emphasized.

Biblical Principles

Precisely, a principle is a fundamental truth upon which others are based. The biblical principles the researcher will discuss here below are essentially timeless truths of Scripture recommended by the Holy Bible for successfully navigating through conflicts. These principles

93. Thomas G. Christensen, *An African Tree of Life* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1990), 100.

call for a commitment and ability to approach conflicts in a gospel centered and biblically faithful manner.

According to Sande, “When used in the light of the gospel, these principles can rob conflict of its destructive tendencies and turn it into an opportunity to find lasting solutions to the serious problems, to experience significant personal growth, to deepen relationships, and, best of all, to experience and demonstrate the love of God in a new and life-giving way.”⁹⁴ These principles are perhaps what the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi need to consider in their effort to effectively transform leadership conflicts. These principles are:

Determine Not to Go to Court

As previously observed, litigation process does not aid conflict transformation at all. In 1 Corinthians 6: 1-8, Paul discourages litigation process when the parties involved are Christians. The text reads, “If any of you has a dispute with another, dare he take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the saints?” In Paul’s view, conflicts among believers should be handled by believers. Christians dragging each other to court not only discredits their faith but also compromises their witness. Worst of all, is when a church leader files a lawsuit against a fellow church leader. In the words of Paul, it means “...you have been completely defeated already” (1Corinthians 6:7).

Ken Sande argues, “Litigation is likely to increase bitterness between the parties and further damage any personal relationship they had previously enjoyed.”⁹⁵ As such, damaged relationships don’t promote brotherly love at all. Instead, they aggravate critical attitudes and fan prolonging of destructive habit patterns. This blocks confession and repentance and may even lead to a life time of undying enmity and estrangement. In addition, litigation process is usually costly and time consuming. Ken Sande maintains, “Whatever the legal rights and wrongs of such matters, these results are not worth it.”⁹⁶

94. Ken Sande, 16.

95. Ibid, 272.

96. Ibid, 273.

The Matthew 18 Process

Matthew 18:15-17 captures the whole biblical process. The NIV reads, “If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you ... But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, ... If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.”

The above text supports the idea of addressing a conflict in privacy and personally. However, if the two are unable to settle the conflict on their own, they can seek help from other church people. As the circle is expanded, the focus is to arrive at genuine repentance and reconciliation. Matthew 18 seems to assume that the church has working systems and institutional structures for conflict transformation.

In summary, the process entails overlooking minor offenses, talking in private, taking one or two others along, telling it to the church and finally treating the perpetrator as a non-believer if he is still adamant. The researcher suggests that the “taking one or two others” mentioned in this text could allude to the services of Christian conciliators, mediators and negotiators. These parties work to enhance communication and promote productive dialogue between the antagonistic parties. They also offer counseling informed by the Scriptures.

The above mentioned reconcilers form part of the church’s internal mechanisms for conflict transformation and peace-building. As Ken Sande puts it, “These individuals may be mutual friends, church leaders, godly and respected individuals in your community, or trained Christian mediators or arbitrators.”⁹⁷ However, if the offender disregards the authority of Scripture and of Christ’s church, he qualifies to be treated as a pagan. The offended person can either drop the case or turn to litigation. Grace should however be extended to the offender knowing too well that God is not yet through with him.

97. Ibid, 188.

Decide to Forgive

In Ephesians 4:32 (NIV), the Bible says, “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” Forgiveness is a very important principle when it comes to effectively transforming conflicts among church leaders. The New International Bible Dictionary notes, “... the effect of forgiveness is the restoration of both parties to the former state of relationship.”⁹⁸ As such, we should forgive and choose not to let the hurt dwell in our minds.

When we forgive, we release the power of God’s love to operate in the heart of the person who offended us. The New International Bible Dictionary further points out that, “Christ taught that forgiveness is a duty, and that no limit should be set to the extent of forgiveness (Luke 17:4).”⁹⁹ Irrespective of the number of times a church leader is offended, they should be more than willing to forgive.

Grow a Culture of Peace

Hebrews 12:14, NIV says, “Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy.” This verse reminds us of the call to be continually involved in aggressive initiatives toward peace-building. As previously observed, peace ought to be grown right inside the church as opposed to enforcing it from outside if it has to be sustainable. Peace is part of God’s character, for He is frequently referred to as “the God of peace” (Rom. 15:33). As such, the church ought to be intentional with regard to growing a culture of peace through training of both its leaders and members to approach conflicts biblically. This calls for well designed programs and initiatives geared towards building the capacity of the church leaders in peace matters.

Institutional Structures

This study treats the terms organization and institution as synonyms. Geoffrey Hodgson argues, “Organizations are special institutions that involve (a) criteria to establish their

98. Merrill C. Tenney (ed), *New International Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1987), 360.

99. *Ibid*, 360.

boundaries and to distinguish their members from non-members, (b) principles of sovereignty concerning who is in charge, and (c) chains of command delineating responsibilities within the organization.”¹⁰⁰ As such, in the context of this research, the term church will be treated both as an institution and organization.

According to Stimpson and Farquharson, organizational structure is “The internal formal framework of a business that shows the way in which management is organized and linked together and how authority is passed through the organization.”¹⁰¹ The structure of an organization is what essentially shapes the behavior of its members, brings order and defines relationships. Pearce and Robinson note, “It is most often seen as a chart, often a pyramidal chart, with positions or titles and roles in cascading fashion.”¹⁰²

Since a church is an institution or rather an organization, it needs a formal structure to function effectively. James D. Berkley admits this fact and argues, “Like other organizations, churches need rules that address matters of internal administration. These constitutions or bylaws, as they are called, promote order and consistency in the life of a church.”¹⁰³ Unfortunately, in most of the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi, the arrangement of tasks, responsibilities and communication is highly informal and accomplished through direct supervision. As earlier noted, majority of the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi do not have constitutions and policy documents.

Laurenti Magesa who captures this fact well notes, “AICs have their shortcomings, including lack of a coherent theology, weak institutional structures...”¹⁰⁴ Since the majority of the Pentecostal churches fall into this category, the implication of Magesa’s assertion is that they

100. Geoffrey M. Hodgson, “What are Institutions?” *IN’ Journal of Economic Issues*, Vol. XL No. 1 (March, 2006): 1-25.

101. Peter Stimpson and Alastair Farquharson, *Cambridge International As and A Level Business Studies, Second Edition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 212.

102. John A. Pearce II and Richard B. Robinson, Jr., *Strategic Management: Formulation, Implementation and Control, Eleventh Edition* (New York: MC Graw Hill, 2009), 341.

103. James D. Berkley (ed), *Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1994), 326.

104. Laurenti Magesa, *What is not Sacred? African Spirituality* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2014), 192.

have weak or poor organizational structures. Weak institutional structures connote undefined or poorly defined levels of hierarchy, chain of command and span of control. They also entail weak constitutions, policy documents, among others. This identified gap points to potential leadership conflicts.

According to Robbins and Judge et al, “An organizational structure defines how job tasks are formally divided, grouped and coordinated.”¹⁰⁵ According to these scholars, there are six key elements that managers need to address when designing their organization’s structure namely, “...work specialization, departmentalization, chain of command, span of control, centralization and decentralization, and formalization.”¹⁰⁶ If a church lacks work specialization or division of labor, it means that an entire job can be done by one person instead of several of them. For instance, the pastor would be the one to program the service, lead the singing, do ushering, take offerings, do the sermon, make announcements, count the offerings, among others.

Conventionally, work specialization is followed by departmentalization. For a church to function well and seal off loopholes which attract conflicts among leaders, it should have various formal departments such as finance, human resource, missions, worship, projects, among others. This is in line with what Pearce and Robinson suggest, “A functional organizational structure is one in which the tasks, people, and technologies necessary to do the work of the business are divided into separate “functional” groups (such as marketing, operations, finance) with increasingly formal procedures for coordinating and integrating their activities to provide the business’s products and services.”¹⁰⁷ As such, just like any other organization, the church should not lag behind in this best practice.

In institutions where systems and structures work, the chain of command is well set out. Robbins and Judge et al define chain of command as, “The unbroken line of authority that

105. Stephen P. Robbins and Timothy A. Judge et al, *Organisational Behaviour, Fifth Edition* (Australia: Pearson Education Australia, 2008), 542.

106. Ibid, 542.

107. John A. Pearce II and Richard B. Robinson, Jr., 342.

extends from the top of the organization to the lowest echelon and clarifies who reports to whom.”¹⁰⁸ Leadership conflicts tend to erupt where the chain of command is not properly defined and adhered to. As such, every leader in a church context ought to know who to report to in the event of a conflict.

Where institutional structures are upheld, authority and unity of command is observed to the letter. Whereas authority refers to “...the rights inherent in a managerial position to give orders and to expect the orders to be obeyed,”¹⁰⁹ unity of command refers to “...the idea that a subordinate should have only one superior to whom he or she is directly responsible.”¹¹⁰ For instance, if the choirmaster has issues with his committee, whom should he report to? As such, institutional structures guard against abuse of authority and confusion in the unity of command.

Organizational behavior scholars argue that highly centralized organizations are more susceptible to leadership conflicts as compared to decentralized organizations. When decision making is concentrated at a single point in the church, conflicts among church leaders tend to rise. The media has repeatedly featured several big Pentecostal churches at different times as run by one man or woman single-handedly. This is what the media calls “one-man-show” leadership style. Stimpson and Farquharson observe that, “Now, more and more firms are using ‘flatter’ and more decentralized structures where decisions are taken anywhere else but at head office.”¹¹¹ The Pentecostal churches in Nairobi therefore seem to lag behind in this current best practice.

With regard to church polity, the Pentecostal churches are known to be Episcopal. According to Wayne Grudem, “In the Episcopalian system, an archbishop has authority over many bishops. They in turn have authority over a diocese.”¹¹² In this system, precisely power is concentrated in one centre. The demerits of this arrangement is that power can easily be abused leading to leadership conflicts. Wayne Grudem points out the necessity of “...guarding against

108. Stephen P. Robbins and Timothy A. Judge et al, 546.

109. Ibid, 546.

110. Ibid, 546.

111. Peter Stimpson and Alastair Farquharson, 211.

112. Wayne Grudem, 923.

the abuse of power that inevitably comes when any one human being has too much power without sufficient checks and balances from others.”¹¹³ A typical organizational structure of an Episcopalian system is shown below:

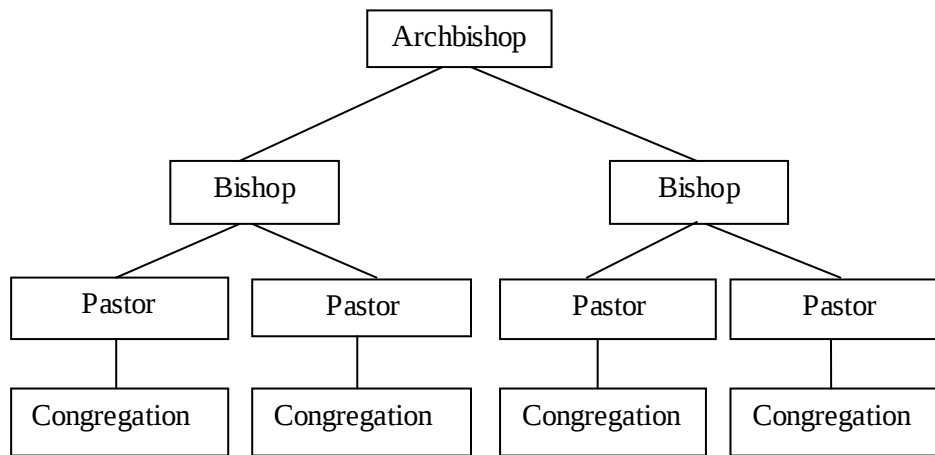


Figure 2.1 Episcopalian Government

However, the kind of Episcopalian system practiced by the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi can't really be said to be the typical system. The media has often featured some of these churches as having amorphous governance structures which can't even be rated as a modified version of the Episcopal system. KTN prime time news once carried a story of a big Pentecostal church in the city centre led by a woman bishop where her sons were said to be key signatories of the church assets. The sons are not church officers, they have no portfolio in the church, yet wield such massive authority by virtue of being the bishop's children. In such contexts, leadership conflicts would more likely find their way in.

Even though Bible scholars do agree that there is no one particular church polity prescribed by the Scriptures, modern scholarship in the field of organizational behavior tend to favor a decentralized system of governance. Robbins and Judge et al argue that, "In a decentralized organization, action can be taken more quickly to solve problems, more people

113. Ibid, 925.

provide input into decisions, and employees are less likely to feel alienated from those who make the decisions that affect their work lives.”¹¹⁴

Contrary to this view, the above mentioned amorphous governance structures in the majority of the Pentecostal churches concentrate too much power in the pastoral office. Without sufficient checks and balances, the powerful pastor can hire and fire any church leader at will. A case was reported in the media where a pastor in one of the Pentecostal churches just woke up one day and fired an entire deacons’ board without any consultation. In most cases, such actions would more likely lead to church splits.

These gaps in the organizational structure of the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi point to potential conflicts among church leaders. As such, this study argues that strong institutional structures play a vital role in helping leaders navigate successfully through leadership conflicts. They provide a helpful framework for tackling conflicts among church leaders. As such, the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi may perhaps have to re-think their church polity.

Successful and Transformative Conflict Strategies

As previously indicated, there was no available data related to conflicts among Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi that the researcher could rely on. Similarly, there was no scholarly documentation of the conflict strategies used in the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi that have proved to be successful and transformative. Precisely, transformative means the strategies used preserve the relationships of the church leaders such that even after the conflict has been addressed, there is forgiveness, reconciliation, healing and a better way forward.

It is important to note that some of the conflict strategies discussed below overlap with biblical principles previously discussed. The researcher identified five such transformative conflict strategies as follows:

114. Stephen P. Robbins and Timothy A. Judge et al, 548.

Forgiveness and Reconciliation

In his letter to the Ephesians' church, the apostle Paul wrote, "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (Eph. 4:32, NIV). Forgiveness and reconciliation is a powerful conflict strategy that has proved to be successful and transformative in addressing leadership conflicts among the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi. According to NIV Bible Dictionary, "The idea of forgiveness is found in either religious or social relations, and means giving up resentment or claim to requital on account of an offense."¹¹⁵ Offenses take various forms. They could be a deprivation of a person's property, rights, or honor among others.

On the other hand, to reconcile entails making peace between persons or groups. It also connotes finding agreement between opposing points of view. Webster's Dictionary defines reconciliation as, "To make friendly again or win over to a friendly attitude." As such, mutual forgiveness and reconciliation are marks of true Christian fellowship. Forgiveness is usually preceded by repentance. There is a give and take in this matter. Christians are to forgive one another because all of them have already been forgiven by God in Christ. As the Expositor's Bible Commentary puts it, "It must flow from ungrudging love."¹¹⁶

The story of Dr. Joe Kayo and the current Deliverance church top bishops is perhaps one of the best illustrations of how transformative this conflict strategy has been. Dr. Joe Kayo founded Deliverance church in 1970 and spearheaded its growth all over Kenya and beyond. However, according to an article in the Dictionary of African Christian Biography by Francis Manana, "At the height of Joe's ministry in the late nineteen seventies, some allegations were made against him which led to a sharp disagreement with his board members. As a result, Joe

115. Merrill C. Tenney (ed), 360.

116. Frank Gaebelein, E. (ed), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Vol. 11.* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Corporation, 1978), 66.

resigned from Deliverance Church.”¹¹⁷ As such, for some years, the relationship between Dr. Joe Kayo and the leaders of Deliverance church remained strained.

However, the current top bishops of Deliverance church approached Dr. Joe Kayo, repented, asked for forgiveness and initiated the process of reconciliation. In one of the conferences bringing together all the bishops and pastors of Deliverance church where Dr. Joe Kayo was invited to minister, the emotions displayed in public attested to the reconciliation which had taken place in their hearts.

While introducing Dr. Joe Kayo to minister, Bishop Mark Kariuki, the current presiding bishop of Deliverance church said, “Today we are honored to have our father, the founder of Deliverance Church ... The founder is here with us today.”¹¹⁸ Those words alone attest to a state of restored relationships. What followed after that is well captured in the *Revival Digest Magazine* as follows:

The apostle Kayo greeted bishops and pastors with joy as his children ... In the middle, the apostle Dr. Joe Kayo saw pastor Makau and called him in front and hugged him, then bishop Njoga came forward with his wife, both very solemn, Dr. Kayo hugged them too; they were all in tears! The spirit of re-union flowed all over; bishops and pastors could be seen hiding their tears which they couldn't. Apostle Kayo told his children, they were his reward, he said ‘if I die today, I will die happy and timely ...’ The apostle pronounced forgiveness to his children ... The spirit of reconciliation was felt all over as the apostle led everyone in repentance prayer. Bishops and pastors started hugging each other, some in tears, you could see joy and light in their faces.¹¹⁹

The Matthew 18 Process

Matthew 18 process is precisely the procedure that Jesus gave to the church for addressing conflicts amongst her members. Matthew 18:15-17, NIV reads, “If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you ... But if he will not listen, take one or two others along ... If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.”

117. www.dacb.org/stories/kenya/kayo_joseph.html accessed 4/25/2015

118. Joe Kayo, “Good Report,” *IN’ Revival Digest* (Last Issue, 2005): 12-13.

119. *Ibid*, 16.

The above conflict strategy has proved to be successful and transformative in addressing leadership conflicts among church leaders. The good thing with this conflict strategy is that it's private. Leaders don't like their negative sides to be exposed. As such, a church leader approaching another church leader in privacy would more likely yield successful transformative results. In summary, the process entails overlooking minor offenses, talking in private, taking one or two others along, telling it to the church and finally treating the perpetrator as a non-believer if he is still adamant.

Early this year, there was a misunderstanding between the senior pastor of Latter Rain Chapel and the senior pastor of Zion Glory Family Church. The senior pastor of Latter Rain Chapel went to the senior pastor of Zion Glory Family Church in privacy and showed him his fault. He admitted his faults and asked to be forgiven. The matter which had threatened to tear their relationship apart was resolved peacefully. Today, their relationship is even better than where it was before the conflict. As such, this conflict strategy has proved to be transformative.

Pentecostal Fathers

Malachi 1:6, NIV says, "A son honors his father, and a servant his master." Utilizing the Pentecostal fathers (founders of the churches) to intervene in situations where bishops and pastors have sunk into conflicts has also proved to be successful and transformative. This is especially where the pastors or bishops in conflict are from different denominations but still within the Pentecostal movement. Pentecostal fathers by virtue of age, experience and respect accorded to them wield a lot of authority and are highly influential. As such, whenever they summon a pastor or a bishop, he has to comply because a father has spoken. Since they talk with the authority of a father, the outcome has been successful and transformative most of the times.

As he welcomed Dr. Joe Kayo to minister at an Interdenominational conference at Kayole, Bishop Wanjala noted, "It's only a father who can put a family in order. The church is not in order as it's supposed to be because we lack fathers. But I thank God for apostle Joe

Kayo, he is a true father. I respect him very much.”¹²⁰ Bishop Wanjala doesn’t belong to Dr. Joe Kayo’s church denomination. His sentiments therefore reveal the situation on the ground. In the above mentioned inter-denominational conference, God used Dr. Joe Kayo to heal the relationships of pastors and bishops at Kayole. The same father - son relationship has been the basis upon which bishops also successfully address conflicts among the pastors and church leaders under them but serving in the branch churches.

Biblical Mediation

Biblical mediation has also proved to be successful and transformative in addressing leadership conflicts among the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi. According to Ken Sande, biblical mediation is, “A process in which one or more Christian conciliators meet with the parties in conflict to promote constructive dialogue and encourage a voluntary and biblically faithful settlement of their personal and substantive differences.”¹²¹ Christian conciliators’ primary goal is reconciliation of the parties in conflict. This is perhaps why this conflict strategy by nature leans on being transformative. Biblical mediation as a conflict strategy espouses a process that is purely conciliatory rather than adversarial in nature. The biblical mediators must be people of integrity, wise, effective communicators, neutral, informed and passionate about leaders’ unity.

In late eighties, an ugly conflict arose between Bishop Arthur Kitonga of Redeemed Gospel Church and the late Bishop Evans Mrima of Gospel Outreach Church. Each accused the other of undermining him. These being the two key Pentecostal fathers in the city of Nairobi at that moment, the conflict threatened to split the Pentecostal Christians into two separate blocs. Rev. Dr. Wilson Mamboleo, acting as a biblical mediator talked to each separately and then finally brought them together at Hilton hotel. He reconciled them and their fellowship was

120. Ibid, 17.

121. Ken Sande, 273.

gloriously restored. They began to invite each other to their respective churches to share the pulpits.

Pastors Fellowships / Ministerial Associations

Pastors Fellowships and Ministerial Associations in Nairobi have been used of God to enhance fellowship among the church ministers from across the denominational divide. These Associations serve to promote forgiveness, healing, reconciliation, better relationships, unity and love amongst the Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi. As such, the Associations in themselves constitute a powerful conflict strategy that has proved to be successful and transformative in addressing leadership conflicts.

For instance, the Association of the Evangelicals of Kenya (EAK) has been on the forefront in reconciling the bishops and pastors in the city of Nairobi. Some bishops who initially could not see eye to an eye are now great friends. Similarly, the Pastors' Fellowships in various estates in the city have also been utilized to intervene in situations where bishops and pastors had sunk into deep conflicts. The executive councils of these Associations usually appoint councils of godly elders (mature clergy) who help the parties in conflict to navigate successfully through the leadership conflicts.

Theological and Biblical Reflection

Exegesis of Galatians 2:6-9

Greek Text

^{BGT} **Galatians 2:6-9** VApō. de. tw/n dokou,ntwn ei=nai, ti(& o`poi/oi, pote h=san ouvde,n moi diafe,rei\ pro,swpon îo`Ð qeo.j avnqrw,pou ouv lamba,nei& evmoi. ga.r oi` dokou/ntej ouvde,n prosane,qento(<sup>7</sup> avlla. touvnanti,on ivdo,ntej o[ti pepi,steumai to. euvagge,lion th/j avkrobusti,aj kaqw.j Pe,troj th/j peritomh/j(<sup>8</sup> o` ga.r evnergh,saj Pe,trw| eivj avpostolh.n th/j

peritomh/j evnh,rghsen kai. evmoi. eivj ta. e;qnh(⁹ kai. gno,ntej
th.n ca,rin th.n doqei/sa,n moi(VIa,kwboj kai. Khfa/j kai.
VIwa,nnhj(oi` dokou/ntej stu/loi ei=nai(dexia.j e;dwkan evmoi.
kai. Barnaba/| koinwni,aj(i[na h`mei/j eivj ta. e;qnh(auvtoi.
de. eivj th.n peritomh,n\

English

Galatians 2:6-9, NIV “As for those who seemed to be important – whatever they were makes no difference to me; God does not judge by external appearance – those men added nothing to my message. On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had been to the Jews. For God, who was at work in the ministry of Peter as an apostle to the Jews, was also at work in my ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles. James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews.”

The translation quoted in the above is from the NIV Bible. However, the researcher will provide his own translation of the Greek text alongside the exposition later on.

Introduction

As indicated earlier, the purpose of this study is to investigate the major factors that contribute to leadership conflicts in selected Pentecostal churches within Nairobi and explore effective approaches of transforming the leadership conflicts. As such, the researcher’s choice of Galatians 2:6-9 was informed by the purpose of the study. The chosen Scriptural passage documents the outcome of the highly emotionally charged sitting at Jerusalem occasioned by a theological conflict. The Judaizers sought to supplement Christianity by adding Mosaic laws thereby demanding the Gentiles to be circumcised.

The researcher chose this particular text because it highlights a major theological conflict that hit the early church leadership threatening to split the infant church right down the middle. It's a classical recorded case in the New Testament where a perfect conflict transformation occurred. Precisely, transforming a conflict means that the conflict is not only resolved but also the deeper concerns of both the issues and relationships involved are dealt with bringing resolution, healing, reconciliation and even a better way forward than what was existing before the conflict. The fact that the pillars gave Paul and Barnabas "... the right hand of fellowship" (Gal. 2:9) at the end attests to this fact.

Objective

The researcher intends to use this exegetical study to draw up timeless biblical truths, principles and insights that the current Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi can emulate for effective conflict transformation. The study seeks to unpack the literature, history and the theology contained in these four verses (2:6-9) and attempt to apply the passage to today's church context for integration purposes. In addition to that, the study seeks to establish the meaning of the text to the original recipients before drawing up the applications. It will also explore the variants and provide a thorough exposition of the Greek text.

Literary Context

The passage and the immediate context document the outcome of the discussion that ensued in this highly emotionally charged sitting at Jerusalem. The apostle is frank about the struggles that characterized the meeting (3-5). The New Bible Commentary observes, "Emotions must have run high, as the broken Greek syntax of these verses suggest."¹²² The main idea of the passage (6-9) is that the men of repute added nothing to Paul's gospel. He declares that his gospel is not according to man, that is, he did not receive it from man.

122. D. A. Carson and R.T. France et al (ed), *The New Bible Commentary* (Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 1211.

In building his defense, he employs rebukes, threats, arguments and narration. Johan S. Vos observes that Paul “Is engaged in a polemic against rival missionaries who had influenced the churches with another gospel.”¹²³ The letter is apologetic in the sense that Paul was defending the truth of his gospel. He comes out quite strongly that salvation is by faith alone in Christ Jesus. The independence of Pauline law-free gospel is sustained as the point of emphasis. However, at the end, the two sides came to a consensus and gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. In so doing, they upheld Paul’s law-free gospel.

The genre of Galatians is a letter or epistle. Schreiner observes, “Most Greco-Roman letters consisted of an opening, a body, and a closing.”¹²⁴ Galatians has all the characteristics of a letter and as such, its genre is not in dispute. Despite the fact that the body of the Pauline letters is much longer than the typical Greco-Roman letters, it does not disqualify them. The New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary argues that, “Because the letter was composed for public hearing, it has many structural and stylistic characteristics in common with the forms of rhetoric that were taught and practiced in the Hellenistic world.”¹²⁵

As such, there is consensus among biblical scholars that Galatians is an apologetic letter. It is structured in accordance with the conventions of ancient judicial rhetoric. Hans Dieter Betz, quoted by the New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary upholds this view and says, “Paul writes as though he were on trial before a jury, speaking in his own defense and in defense of the Spirit.”¹²⁶ As such, he becomes the defendant, the Judaizers become his accusers while the Galatians become the jury.

The Variant

123. Johan S. Vos, “Paul’s Argumentation in Galatians 1- 2” ‘IN’ *Harvard Theological Review* (Jan., 1994): 1

124. Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians: Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2010), 71.

125. Leander E. Keck (ed), *The New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary, Vol. XI*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), 188.

126. *Ibid*, 188.

Galatians 2:9 VIa, kwboj kai. Khfa/j kai. VIwa, nnhj (Translation: “James and Cephas and John”)

The name Khfa/j is Aramaic. The researcher keenly notes that the Western witnesses tend to favor Petroj, the Greek form of it. However, the Committee maintained the Latin form Khfa/j. The researcher also notes that the James mentioned here is the half-brother of Jesus and not the son of Zebedee. By the time Paul was writing this letter, James had already been killed by Herod (Acts 12:2). Commenting on the Western witnesses, Bruce Metzger observes “... two of the same witnesses...give more prominence to Peter by placing his name first in the series...”¹²⁷ However, the Committee retained James’ name first in the series, perhaps because he was the leader of the church at Jerusalem according to Acts 15. The researcher therefore upholds this order in the exegetical study of the text.

Historical Context

Authorship

Biblical scholars have questioned the authorship of several books of the Bible. However, Galatians stands out as an exception. It is one of the few books which does not attract significant scholarly debate in regard to who wrote it. In the words of Thomas Schreiner, “Indeed, Galatians is often identified as quintessentially Pauline.”¹²⁸ Upholding this view, Scot McKnight writes, “Before Paul could get off on his second missionary journey (cf. Acts 15:36 - 18:23), and just before the Apostolic Council of Acts 15, Paul sent this urgent and emotional missive to Galatia with the prayer and hope that it would straighten out the Galatian churches.”¹²⁹ As such, there is consensus among the biblical scholars that it’s Paul who wrote it. Again, both internal and

127. Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, Second Edition* (U.S.A: United Bible Societies, 2002), 523.

128. Thomas R. Schreiner, 22.

129. Scot McKnight, *Galatians: The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1995), 21.

external evidence point to Paul as the author. He is mentioned by name at the beginning (1:1) and also towards the end of the letter (5:2).

Date and Place of Writing

The exact date and place of writing of this letter has remained uncertain till this date. The Southern Galatia hypothesis places the date of writing much earlier as compared to the Northern Galatia hypothesis and the scope is wider. According to south Galatian hypothesis, this letter was written before the events of Acts 15:1-35. This hypothesis qualifies Galatians to be the earliest Pauline letter. Thomas Schreiner who favors the south Galatian hypothesis and correlates Acts 15:1-35 with Galatians 2:1-10, places the letter before the events of Acts 15:1-35 and notes, “Galatians is the earliest Pauline letter and may have been written ca. AD 48.”¹³⁰ As such the most probable date in respect to south Galatian hypothesis is early 50s. The proponents of north Galatian hypothesis date the writing of the letter somewhere between AD 50 -57. However, the researcher keenly notes that going by either of the hypothesis does not in any way affect the meaning of the text.

Recipients

The identity of the recipients of this letter has been a subject of big debate over the years. We do not know for certain to whom this letter was written. It does not mention any particular town or city that housed the churches of Galatia. This makes it difficult to establish with certainty the geographical locality of these churches. Were they located in the traditional territory of the ethnic Galatians (north Galatia) or in the places mentioned in Acts 14, in Roman Provincial Galatia (south Galatia)? This study favors south Galatian theory which maintains that the letter was written to the cities Paul visited on his first missionary journey in Acts 13-14.

130. Thomas R. Schreiner, 31.

In this journey, Paul was accompanied by Barnabas. They visited the cities namely Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe (Acts 13-14). There is no evidence whatsoever of Barnabas ever evangelizing the north Galatian churches. Thus, the mentioning of Barnabas as a minister personally known to Galatian churches raises the possibility of a south Galatian destination. Again, Paul's use of the Roman imperial terms points more to the Roman province of Galatia. As such, the weight of probability seems to lean more on the south Galatian destination. However, the destination of the letter doesn't at all affect the meaning of the text.

Situation

Precisely, the circumstances which forced Paul to write this letter to the Galatians was the problem of the Judaizers. In the words of McKnight, Judaizers refers to "A specific movement in early Christianity that believed conversion to Christ also involved a further conversion to their (pharisaic) form of Judaism."¹³¹ Here in Galatians, the Judaizer's primary concern was circumcision (2:3, 5:6, 6:12) and Jewish food laws (2:11-14). They sought to supplement Christianity by adding Mosaic laws (3:3). They also, as James D. Hester points out, accused Paul of preaching "...an inferior gospel because he was dependent on Jerusalem for his instruction in the gospel."¹³² The Judaizers were throwing the young Galatian church into confusion and trying to pervert the gospel of Jesus Christ. Unless checked, this group posed the threat of reducing the infant Galatian church to a mere extension of Judaism. This would have spelt doom for the young Christian faith which had just begun to take root in the Gentile world.

Translation and Exposition of Galatians 2:6-9

131. Scot McKnight, 21.

132. James D. Hester, "The Rhetorical Structure of Galatians 1:11- 2:14" 'IN' *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 103, No. 2 (June, 1984): 227.

Galatians 2:6 VApo. de. tw/n dokou,ntwn ei=nai, ti(& o`poi/oi, pote h=san ouvde,n moi diafe,rei\ pro,swpon îo`ð qeo.j avnqrw,pou ouv lamba,nei& evmoi. ga.r oi` dokou/ntej ouvde.n prosane,qento(

From those seeming to be of reputation (indeed, of what kind they were then, makes no difference to me; God does not pay attention to external appearance) those of reputation conferred nothing to me

From this verse, Paul recaptures the flow of his narration he left off at verse two. The New American Commentary observes, “In the Greek text vv. 6-10 constitutes one long, convoluted sentence with several major ideas condensed into a difficult sequence of thought.”¹³³ The three characters in question here are James, Peter and John. In reference to them, Paul employs three phrases: “those who seemed to be leaders,” “those who seemed to be important,” “those reputed to be pillars.” This language sounds somehow sarcastic and expresses disappointment. Why this unusual and perhaps even different way of referring to the pillars?

The reason behind Paul’s disappointment remains uncertain. However, it can be postulated that perhaps the story of Peter’s conduct at Antioch (2:11-13) holds some leads. Paul seems to be disappointed with the conduct of those who should have been leaders in this great crisis of faith and doctrine but who failed to take the lead. It is quite evident that the pillars didn’t perform well as expected during this time of crisis. According to the Expositor’s Bible Commentary, “Paul felt that the Jerusalem apostles did not perform on a level commensurate with the reputation they held, either at the council or (in Peter’s case) after it.”¹³⁴ If they had been, perhaps the circumcision group wouldn’t have caused such havoc.

With regard to grammar, Schreiner observes, “The shift in tense between the imperfect ‘they were’ (h=san) and the present tense ‘differs’ (diafe,rei) has spawned some

133. Timothy George, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville, Tennessee: B & H Publishing Group, 1994), 153.

134. Frank Gaebelein, E. (ed), 443.

discussion.”¹³⁵ The word *h=san* is an imperfect active indicative third person plural from the word *eimi* (I am). The word (*diafe, rei*) is a present active indicative third person singular from the word *diaferw* (to differ). As such, the researcher shares the opinion that the imperfect *h=san* made reference to the relationship the pillars had with the historical Jesus. Paul did not reject or undermine the apostolic authority of the pillars. He simply warns against judging too highly or overestimating the pillars. Venerating the pillars, in his view, amounted to a grave mistake. The apostles were men after all and hence not always perfect in their initial reactions or conduct.

In the words of Schreiner, “They should not be venerated simply because they were disciples of Jesus during His earthly ministry.”¹³⁶ To him, what counts is the authority of the gospel and not the stature of human beings. Their status in regard to having been with the historical Jesus (when He was in the flesh) didn’t mean much to Paul. The doctrinal crisis was Paul’s focus and concern.

Galatians 2:7 *avlla. touvnanti,on ivdo,ntej o[ti pepi,steumai to. euvagge,lion th/j avkrobusti,aj kaqw.j Pe,troj th/j peritomh/j(*

But on the contrary, because they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcision, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel for the circumcision

With regard to grammar, the word *avkrobusti,aj* (uncircumcision) is an objective genitive. According to Ngewa, objective genitive “Tells us who / what the recipient of the action is.”¹³⁷ In this case, the Gentiles (*avkrobusti,aj*) are the recipients of the gospel entrusted to Paul. The word “uncircumcision” refers to the Gentiles while; “circumcision” refers to the Jews. “The gospel for the uncircumcision” (*to. euvagge,lion th/j avkrobusti,aj*) and “the gospel for the circumcision” refers to the gospel for the Gentiles and Jews respectively. The

135. Thomas Schreiner, 127.

136. Ibid, 126.

137. Samuel M. Ngewa, *Greek Beyond Forms: Greek 3 Or Greek 4* (Unpublished Work).

word *ivdo, ntej* is a causal participle. According to Wallace, “The causal participle indicates the cause or reason or ground of the action of the finite verb.”¹³⁸ It seeks to establish the reasons behind or the basis of an action of the main verb. The use of the causal participle *ivdo, ntej* (“because they saw”) here implies a change of mind by the pillars after they “saw” that Paul had been entrusted with the gospel to the Gentiles just as Peter had been to the Jews.

Perhaps initially, the pillars were skeptical and uncertain. The change of mind came possibly after Paul and Barnabas reported all that God had done through them among the Gentiles (Acts 15:4). The researcher suggests *ivdo, ntej* could also be a temporal participle. However, he shares the opinion that causal participle is stronger. If we were to view the word *ivdo, ntej* as a temporal participle, the translation would change to (“when they saw”).

While causal participle answers the question “why?” temporal participle answers the question “when?” According to Wallace, “In relation to its controlling verb, the temporal participle answers the question, When?”¹³⁹ In our case here, the researcher preferred causal participle to temporal participle because the context implies so. Precisely, the pillars supported the Pauline gospel because “they saw.”

Schreiner opines that “The word entrusted (*pepi, steumai*) should be understood here as a divine passive, and hence it is God who entrusted Paul with the Gospel for those who were uncircumcised.”¹⁴⁰ This is in reference to his calling and encounter with Christ. However, this statement should not be misconstrued to connote two different gospels in content. Schreiner is quick to note, “Paul does not speak of two different gospels in content but of two different cultures in which the one gospel was proclaimed.”¹⁴¹

138. Wallace, Daniel B. *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1996), 631.

139. *Ibid*, 623.

140. Thomas Schreiner, 128.

141. *Ibid*, 128.

With regard to history, the Jerusalem pillars simply recognized that God had indeed entrusted Paul with ministry to the Gentiles. As a matter of fact, they did not validate but simply upheld the Pauline law-free gospel. As such, they gave him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship.

Galatians 2:8 ο` ga.r evnergh,saj Pe,trw| eivj avpostolh.n th/j peritomh/j evnh,rghsen kai. evmoi. eivj ta. e;qnh(

For the one who worked in Peter as an apostle of the circumcision also worked in me for the Gentiles

With regard to history, this verse is supportive of the claims made in the previous verse. The verse depicts Peter and Paul as both called of God, entrusted with the same gospel but assigned different mission fields. With regard to grammar, the word peritomh/j (circumcision) is an objective genitive. Paul employs this objective genitive to establish the apostle Peter's primary sphere of operation. In this case, the Jews (peritomh/j) are the recipients of the gospel entrusted to Peter. Peter's ministry is to the Jews while Paul's ministry is to the Gentiles.

Scot McKnight simply puts it this way, "Paul with the uncomfortable, potentially disturbing, ministry of opening the rest of the world to the message of Christ and Peter with the more comfortable, home-missions ministry with all its social problems."¹⁴² The omission of the word avpostolh.n (apostle) with regard to Paul has caused some scholars to argue that Paul's apostolic status was not recognized in Jerusalem. Some scholars have argued that this verse ought to be read as an ellipsis asserting Paul's apostleship, others have construed the omission of "apostleship" (avpostolh.n) to mean that Paul has an inferior position as compared to Peter while other scholars use the verse to totally dismiss Paul's apostleship.

142. Scot McKnight, 86.

William O. Walker takes an even extreme position and supports Ernst Barnikol who argued that, "...the verse should be viewed as part of a later, non-Pauline interpolation."¹⁴³ The researcher totally disagrees with this view. In the opinion of the researcher, this is stretching it too far. Paul's unquestionable apostolic status is clearly affirmed from the onset of this letter. Both immediate and larger contexts attest to this fact also. To rely on an inconsistency in this verse to generate a scholarly controversy is in the researcher's opinion myopic and being trivial. The researcher agrees with Schreiner's view that "Paul's apostolic authority is implied."¹⁴⁴

Galatians 2:9 kai. gno,ntej th.n ca,rin th.n doqei/sa,n moi(VIa,kwboj kai. Khfa/j kai. VIwa,nnhj(oi` dokou/ntej stu/loi ei=nai( dexia.j e;dwkan evmoi. kai. Barnaba/| koinwni,aj( i[na h`mei/j eivj ta. e;qnh(auvtoi. de. eivj th.n peritomh,n\

And because they recognized the grace given to me, James and Cephas and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave to me and to Barnabas the right hand of fellowship in order that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcision

With regard to history, this verse finally drives the point home. It was not until the pillars recognized the grace given to Paul that they gave him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. After hearing the concrete evidence of God's workings among the Gentiles, the pillars took up a stand. They didn't require Titus to be circumcised (2:3). They attested to the fact that God's grace was operative in Paul's ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles.

With regard to grammar, the word gno,ntej is a causal participle. This is because it answers the question "why." It establishes the reasons why the pillars recognized the Pauline law-free gospel and gave him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. As a direct result of this "recognizing," the pillars accepted the Pauline law-free gospel. The phrase "right hand of fellowship" is a metaphor connoting acceptance by the Jerusalem "big three" leaders. Scot

143. William O. Walker, "Galatians 2:8 and the Question of Paul's Apostleship" 'IN' *Journal of Biblical Literature* (Summer, 2004): 327.

144. Thomas R. Schreiner, 129.

McKnight opines that, “The ‘right hand of fellowship’ was an official agreement between Paul (and his companions) and the Jerusalem pillars.”¹⁴⁵

Of interest here is Paul’s identification of Peter using his Aramaic name, Cephas (Khfa/j), in contrast to 2:7-8. It is quite evident that Paul acknowledged and saluted the authority of the pillars. However, as previously observed, he was totally against an undue veneration of them. Schreiner correctly observes, “Final authority does not reside in any person but only in the gospel (1:8). Leaders are to be respected but not venerated, honored but not exalted above the gospel.”¹⁴⁶

A Brief Word Study of the Word “koinwni,a” (2:9)

(...dexia.j e;dwkan evmoi. kai. Barnaba/| koinwni,a,j()) (...**gave to me and to Barnabas the right hand of fellowship**)

According to the NIV Exhaustive Concordance, the word “koinwni,a” is used ninety nine (99) times in the entire Bible. In the New Testament, it is used only twelve (12) times. It is correctly translated as “fellowship” in the English language.

English Range of Meaning

Webster’s Dictionary defines the word fellowship as, “A group of companions or fellows, an association of persons having the same tastes, occupations, or interests; a band; a company.” Cambridge International Dictionary of English looks at the same word as, “A friendly feeling that exists between people who have a shared interest or are doing something as a group.”

Greek Range of Meaning

According to Gerhard Kittel, koinwni,a is “An abstract term from koinwnoj and koinwnew, denotes “participation,” “fellowship,” esp. with a close bond. It expresses a two-sided relation ... Emphasis may be on either the giving or the receiving. It thus means 1.

145. Scot McKnight, 86.

146. Thomas R. Schreiner, 121-122.

“Participation.” 2. “Impartation.” 3. “Fellowship.”¹⁴⁷ Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible defines *koinwni, a* as, “Partnership, participation, social intercourse, to communicate, communion, fellowship.”¹⁴⁸ According to Vine’s Expository Dictionary of the New Testament Words, *koinwni, a* is defined as “Communion, fellowship, sharing in common (from *koinos*), is translated ‘communion’ in Icor. 10:16. It is most frequently translated ‘fellowship.’”¹⁴⁹

koinwni, a has a number of synonyms like *koinwnew* (to share with others, communicate, distribute, be partaker), *koinwnikoj* (communicate, willing to communicate), *koinwnoj* (denotes a partaker or partner, a sharer, associate, companion, fellowship), *koinwn* (to share with someone in something) and *koino* (common).

Summary of the Meaning of *koinwni, a*

Words have meaning in context. As such, drawing from the evidence adduced in the above, in researcher’s opinion, it is appropriate and correct to translate the Greek word *koinwni, a* (Gal.2:9) as “fellowship.” This opinion is also shared by Gerhard Kittel, W.E. Vine and the Analytical Greek Lexicon. Fellowship therefore carries the concepts of partnership, communion, participation, sharing with others, sharing in common, communicating, association, companionship, impartation, among others. Gerhard Kittel observes, “Paul uses *koinwni, a* for the religious fellowship (participation) of the believer in Christ and Christian blessings, and for the mutual fellowship of believers.”¹⁵⁰ He further argues that, “In Gal. 2:9 (*εδωκαν δεξια. j koinwni, aj*) shaking hands is an expression of the full fellowship established by

147. Gerhard Kittel (ed), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. 111 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), 798.

148. James Strong, *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Iowa Falls, Iowa: Riverside Book and Bible House, ____), 42.

149. W.E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of the New Testament Words* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985), 90.

150. Gerhard Kittel (ed), 804.

common faith in Christ.”¹⁵¹ Precisely, by this act, Paul was acknowledged by the Jerusalem church pillars to be a genuine *koinwnoj* of Christ.

Theological Themes

From this thorough exposition of Galatians 2:6-9, the researcher has drawn three key theological themes quite significant to the purpose of this study. These are: the theme of grace, theme of false teachers and theme of reconciliation.

To begin with, the theme of grace is central in Pauline letters. He told the Ephesians’ church that, “...It is by grace you have been saved” (Eph.2:5). We are saved and sustained by God’s grace. According to Ken Sande, “Peacemakers are people who breathe grace to others in the midst of conflict.”¹⁵² Paul paints the idea of peace as a consequence of grace. This is evident from the order in the greeting in the opening chapter. In 2:9, he talks of the “grace given to me.” The Jerusalem sitting was highly emotional and threatened to split the infant church right in the middle. However, the two antagonistic camps breathed grace to each other and upheld peace until they successfully navigated through the conflict.

Grace enables church leaders to overcome pride. This is evidenced by the humility displayed by the three Jerusalem church pillars. Grace enabled them to extend the right hand of fellowship to Paul. Where grace is allowed to manifest, effective conflict transformation becomes practical. As the leaders approach the conflict, grace and peace ensure that their eyes are kept on the value of preserving the relationships. The cases highlighted in this study where Pentecostal church leaders went separate ways were perhaps due to failure to extend grace to each other which led to the collapse of talks paving the way for church splits.

The second theme is the theme of false teachers. This study has already identified theological and ideological differences as a major cause of leadership conflicts. As evidenced in (2:4), the conflict highlighted in this expository study was caused by some false brothers who

151. Ibid, 808.

152. Ken Sande, 170.

“... had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves.” Precisely, the false teachers sneaked into the Jerusalem church and caused no little commotion and doctrinal confusion. They taught that unless one is circumcised and observes the Law of Moses he/she cannot be saved. Perhaps, they professed belief in Jesus as Messiah and Lord but Paul exposed and condemned them as false brothers (*yeudade, lfouj* ()) worthy of eternal curse. As such, the need to defend the faith is well articulated in this letter.

Even today, false brothers, controversial brothers, heretics and rebels are a major source of conflicts among church leaders. If given the opportunity to spread their heresy and draw followers after them, they can easily split churches. This is a major lesson for the Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi on how to deal with the false teachers who have infiltrated our city of late. Using the easy-to-sell gospel of prosperity, they have drawn thousands of followers after them. If their teaching is not well countered, it is recipe for leadership conflicts. The Pentecostal churches in Nairobi must take a decisive stand against all forms of false teachings that threaten to enslave God’s people and cause leadership conflicts.

The third theme is the theme of reconciliation. When church leaders go through a heated argument where emotions get out of hand, there is always a need to reconcile at the end. This appears to be the case at the Jerusalem sitting as evidenced by the broken Greek syntax of the verses. However, at the end, the two antagonistic camps struck a consensus, shook hands and fully reconciled. This was aimed at preserving their relationships as the conflict transformation model proposes.

In the words of Ken Sande, “Peace and unity are so important that Jesus commands us to seek reconciliation with a brother even ahead of worship.”¹⁵³ In the case of the initially emotionally charged Jerusalem sitting, reconciliation was demonstrated publicly by the giving of the “right hand of fellowship” at the end of it. The Jerusalem pillars acknowledged Paul as a genuine *koinwnoj* of Christ.

153. Ibid, 49.

Commenting on the giving of the “right hand of fellowship,” Ngewa observes, “This act was a common pledge of friendship or covenant.”¹⁵⁴ As such, the action can be viewed as an external gesture of an inner reconciliation that had taken place in the hearts of the parties involved. Timothy George sees more into this practice and opines, “This was more than the sealing of a ‘gentleman’s agreement’ between two competing parties.”¹⁵⁵ Scot McKnight admits that, “This is more than a Western ‘handshake.’”¹⁵⁶ It was a handshake loaded with meaning. As previously indicated, it was an expression of the full fellowship established by common faith in Christ. As such, the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi ought to embrace reconciliation as the last step in addressing leadership conflicts with the sole aim of preserving the relationships.

Conclusion

This Scriptural passage in the researcher’s view encapsulates the whole idea of conflict transformation that is informed by biblical principles. Paul doesn’t hide the struggles that characterized the meeting. The Judaizers sought to supplement Christianity by adding Mosaic laws thereby demanding the Gentiles to be circumcised. The clash between Paul and the church pillars at the Jerusalem sitting was so sharp that emotions went out of hand as evidenced by the broken Greek syntax in the verses. However, they determined not to go to court but to address the conflict internally using biblical principles and the existing institutional structures. The two antagonistic camps swallowed their pride and agreed to sit and resolve the conflict. They extended grace to each other in spite of their high status in the church.

The main idea of verse 6-9 is that the men of repute added nothing to Paul’s gospel. At the end, a consensus was struck. Precisely, the pillars upheld the Pauline law-free gospel and gave him and Barnabas “... the right hand of fellowship...” (2:9). As observed earlier, the phrase “right hand of fellowship” is a metaphor connoting acceptance by the Jerusalem “big three”

59. 154. Samuel M. Ngewa (ed), *Africa Bible Commentary Series: Galatians* (Nairobi: Hippo Books, 2010),

155. Timothy George, 164.

156. Scot McKnight, 86.

leaders. Scot McKnight opines that, “The ‘right hand of fellowship’ was an official agreement between Paul (and his companions) and the Jerusalem pillars.”¹⁵⁷ In the context of this study, the “right hand of fellowship” is a metaphor connoting effective conflict transformation. It symbolizes inner reconciliation manifested outwardly. As such, the relationship between Paul and the Jerusalem pillars was not only preserved but also a better way forward was realized.

The New American Commentary observes, “Significantly, the same word for fellowship (*koinwnia*) recurs in the apostolic benediction at the end of 2Cor. 13:14: ‘May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ ... and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit...’”¹⁵⁸ As such, it was a “big” word in the world of the early church. The idea of conflict transformation is further reinforced by Paul’s identification of Peter using his Aramaic name, Cephas (Kḥḏa/j), in sharp contrast to the way he identifies him in verses 7 and 8. The warmth and the “covenantal bonding” between the two camps are quite evident and explicit.

Ideally, this is how leadership conflicts ought to end. If by the end of it all the relationships are not preserved, we cannot talk of the leadership conflict having been transformed. As such, the pastors in the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi ought to draw major lessons from this passage. Perhaps, they need a paradigm shift whereby they shun adversarial approaches to leadership conflicts and embrace approaches that promote peace, breathing grace to each other, forgiveness, healing and reconciliation.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed the relevant literature with regard to the study topic. The researcher explored the major causes of conflicts and discussed five models of conflict approaches namely conflict management model, conflict resolution model, conflict transformation model, African cultural approaches and biblical principles. The researcher also

157. Ibid, 86.

158. Timothy George, 164.

explored the relevance of institutional structures in the transformation of leadership conflicts. Institutional structures provide a helpful framework for addressing leadership conflicts in the church. The chapter ended with an exegetical study of Galatians 2:6-9 for integration purposes.

A critical examination of the literature review reveals that the conflict transformation model which the researcher argues for is not all that new in terms of practice. By exploring the literature on the Ubuntu concept, the researcher has demonstrated that preservation of relationships was at the core of the African approach to conflicts. The Ubuntu philosophy “I am because we are and, since we are, therefore I am” cemented their communal worldview.

John Lederach’s conflict transformation model which not only focuses on resolving the conflict but also deals with the deeper concerns of both the issues and relationships involved, bringing resolution, healing, reconciliation and even a better way forward than what was existing before the conflict appears to read from the same script with the African cultural approach. His model likewise emphasizes the preservation of relationships.

Again, in developing the conflict transformation model, John Lederach seems to have drawn a lot from the biblical principles. Preservation of brotherly relationships is an idea held dearly by the Bible. The exegetical study of Galatians 2:6-9 has served to reinforce the biblical principles previously explored and has also provided a sort of bench-marking experience on how leadership conflicts ought to be approached and addressed with a focus on preserving relationships.

In conclusion, the researcher shares the opinion that conflict transformation model, tied with the biblical principles and informed by the African cultural approach is perhaps the effective approach to transforming conflicts among the Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi. The conflict transformation model argues for a better way forward than what was existing before the conflict. This is exactly what happened between Paul and the church pillars namely: James, Peter and John after the conflict as evidenced by the giving of the right hand of fellowship.

According to MacArthur, “In the Near East, to clasp the right hand of a person was to make a solemn vow of friendship and was a mark of fellowship, or partnership.”¹⁵⁹ The church pillars at Jerusalem recognized Paul as a friend and partner with them in the covenant of Christ’s service. As such, the post-conflict status between Paul and the Jerusalem church pillars was far much better than the pre-conflict status. This is the position the researcher upholds.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

As noted previously, the purpose of this research was to investigate the major factors that contribute to leadership conflicts in selected Pentecostal churches within Nairobi and explore effective approaches of transforming the leadership conflicts. The research findings will help the

159. John F. MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Galatians* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1987), 42.

church leaders to know how to effectively transform leadership conflicts which would more likely translate into rapid church growth, fulfillment of the Great Commission, healthy relationships, among others.

This chapter deals with an overview of the research methodology that the researcher carried out which comprised the research design, variables, location of the study, target population, sampling techniques, research instruments, pilot study, validity, reliability, data collection techniques, data analysis techniques and logistical and ethical considerations.

Research Design

According to Kothari, a research design is “...the conceptual structure within which research is conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data.”¹⁶⁰ As such, its goal is to harmonize the major parts of the research for effective addressing of the research questions. The study mainly employed qualitative research design. However, quantitative research design was still used but on a minimal level. Mugenda and Mugenda argue that, “By using the qualitative method, researchers are able to collect data and explain phenomena more deeply and exhaustively.”¹⁶¹ The survey design was purely descriptive. This design is perhaps the most suitable and relevant in collecting information about people’s opinions, attitudes, perspectives, habits and other social issues as it was the case in this study.

Variables

In the words of Mugenda, “A variable is defined as a measurable characteristic that assumes different values among units of a specific population.”¹⁶² There are two main variables in any given research namely independent variable and dependent variable. In this study, the independent variables were: Biblical principles, models of conflict approaches, African cultural

160. Kothari, C.R. *Research Methodology* (New Delhi: New Age International (P) Limited Publishers, 2004), 31.

161. Olive M. Mugenda and Abel G. Mugenda, *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches* (Nairobi:ACTS Press, 2003), 197.

162. Mugenda, 115.

approaches and institutional structures for conflict transformation and peace-building while the dependent variable was positive conflict transformation between church leaders.

Chandran views an independent variable as, “One that is manipulated by the researcher to observe the effect of its change on what is called a dependent variable while a dependent variable is influenced by the change in the independent variable.”¹⁶³ The researcher ensured that extraneous variables were kept under control to ensure that they did not influence the results of the study.

Location of Study

The research was conducted in Nairobi. The selected Pentecostal churches were drawn from the entire city and not from a particular estate or region.

Target Population

In the words of Kombo and Tromp, “A population is a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement (for example a population of students).”¹⁶⁴ As such, it is a larger group from which a sample is extracted. If a study deals with people, according to Kombo and Tromp, a sample, “... can be defined as a set of respondents (people) selected from a large population for the purpose of a survey.”¹⁶⁵ The target population selected for this research was Pentecostal churches in Nairobi. This population had the capacity to exhibit diversity, accessibility and representativeness.

Sampling Techniques

The researcher used purposive sampling method to select only 30 Pentecostal church denominations out of the more than one thousand Pentecostal church denominations in Nairobi. In purposive sampling method, a group of people believed to be a reliable source of the

163. Chandran, E, *Research Methods: A Quantitative Approach with Illustration from Christian Ministries* (Nairobi: Daystar University, 2004), 23.

164. Kombo and Tromp, 76.

165. Ibid, 77-78.

information needed for the study is targeted. According to Kombo and Tromp, “The power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information rich cases for in-depth analysis related to the central issues being studied.”¹⁶⁶ As such, the researcher purposely targeted the Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi who had successfully navigated through leadership conflicts.

The study targeted a total of 50 respondents comprised of 40 pastors and 10 bishops. The researcher personally delivered questionnaires to the 40 pastors and collected them immediately after they were completed. The 10 bishops were interviewed face-to-face by the researcher using structured interview method. In addition to this, the researcher followed up with five out of the ten bishops using self-administered questionnaires to establish whether the information collected through the questionnaires corroborated the information collected through face-to-face structured interviews. The exercise also ensured that the needed information was captured more accurately and comprehensively.

To accurately identify the resourceful Pentecostal bishops in Nairobi who had successfully navigated through leadership conflicts, the researcher made use of the snowball sampling technique. As Kombo and Tromp put it, “Snowball sampling begins with a few people or cases and then gradually increases the sample size as new contacts are mentioned by the people you started out with.”¹⁶⁷ As such, the researcher requested for contacts of other equally resourceful bishops from those he interviewed first.

Construction of the Research Instruments

The study employed self-administered questionnaires to gather primary data from the respondents. The researcher also made use of face-to-face structured interviews to supplement the questionnaires. These two research tools are the most appropriate in a descriptive study. They bring out people’s opinions and attitudes towards a given topic very well. In line with the

166. Kombo and Tromp, 82.

167. Kombo and Tromp, 83.

objectives of the study, the researcher interviewed the bishops who had successfully navigated through leadership conflicts. The snowball sampling technique was used to identify the bishops who met that criterion. However, the study did not require the rest of the respondents to meet this criterion.

Questionnaire

In the words of Kothari, “A questionnaire consists of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms.”¹⁶⁸ A questionnaire can be sent by email to the respondents or delivered by hand. Kombo and Tromp who hold the same view on questionnaires have stated, “In questionnaires respondents fill in answers in written form and the researcher collects the forms with the completed information.”¹⁶⁹ As such, the filled questionnaires can either be collected immediately after the given response time is over or later on as per the agreement.

Due to the sensitive nature of the respondents who were pastors and bishops, the researcher personally delivered the questionnaires and collected them immediately after the given response time was over. Bishops and pastors are usually quite busy and in the event a questionnaire is left behind, there are very high chances of it being filled by the secretary thereby compromising validity and reliability. The researcher used both closed and open-ended questions. This was to ensure that the study effectively and comprehensively captured the targeted data from the respondents.

Interview

According to Kothari, “The interview method of collecting data involves presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses.”¹⁷⁰ The interview is an effective tool in discovering people’s opinions on a given topic of study. It can either be face-to-face or

168. Ibid, 100.

169. Kombo and Tromp, 103.

170. Kothari, 97.

on telephone. The researcher made use of interviews to supplement the questionnaires as earlier noted. However, the preferred method was structured personal interviews. In the words of Kothari, "Such interviews involve the use of a set of pre-determined questions and ... follows a rigid procedure laid down, asking questions in a form and order prescribed."¹⁷¹ The researcher considered structured interviews more reliable as compared to unstructured ones which allow much freedom hence raising the chances of compromised data.

In order to minimize the bias of the interviewer, the researcher opted for personal face-to-face interviews. Telephone interviews as Kothari observes are "... not suitable for intensive surveys where comprehensive answers are required to various questions."¹⁷² This being such a sensitive study, it elicited comprehensive answers. As such, telephone interviews were not deemed appropriate. The structured interview guide mainly consisted of open-ended questions. Such open-ended questions facilitated the respondents to exhaustively express their opinions and positions on the topic. This led to a detailed study of the research topic. Considering the purpose of this study, the two tools of data collection were the most appropriate.

Pilot Study

The researcher carried out a pilot study over a period of two days in the third week of May, 2015 to pretest the research instruments and also to identify and address potential challenges related to data collection. The pretest was conducted with a small representative sample of ten respondents. Precisely, the purpose of the pretesting exercise was to ascertain the twin factors of validity and reliability. The researcher wanted to determine whether the

171. Ibid, 97-98.

172. Ibid, 100.

respondents would correctly interpret the questions, whether the wording of the questions was clear and whether the questions provided the desired outcome.

In addition, the researcher wanted to establish whether there was any bias, any ambiguities in the questions, any technical jargon that might pose a challenge to the respondents and whether the language used in the questionnaires and interview guides was consistent with the respondents' educational level. The study also familiarized the researcher with the questions and gave him a feel of how the data collection exercise would be.

The pilot study revealed a number of weaknesses with the research instruments. First, the language used in some of the questions was fairly technical and ambiguous. Secondly, the researcher found out that most of the bishops and pastors were very busy people that needed serious follow up to schedule meetings with them. Thirdly, the study found out that leaving behind the questionnaires would tempt some respondents to dump them. The researcher therefore reinforced the idea of personally delivering the questionnaires and collecting them immediately after the given response time was over.

In addition, the researcher was able to get further useful insights from the respondents that were not anticipated during the construction of the questionnaire and interview guide. Based on the findings of the pilot study, the researcher corrected, refined and re-did the research instruments sealing off the loopholes highlighted to improve their validity and reliability. Upon completion of this exercise, the researcher embarked on data collection.

Validity

Traditionally, validity used to be looked at as the degree to which an instrument measures the intended phenomena. However, as Mugenda argues, "Researchers have come to define validity as the accuracy, truthfulness and meaningfulness of inferences that are based on the data

obtained from the use of a tool or a scale for each construct or variable in the study.”¹⁷³ As such, validity has to do with how accurately the collected data from the field represents the variables of the study. This study therefore took care of validity and reliability by pretesting the research instruments to ascertain the consistency of the feedback.

Reliability

Precisely, reliability refers to the dependability of the research instrument and the trustworthiness of the data. Mugenda looks at it as, “A measure of the degree to which a research instrument would yield the same results or data after repeated trials.”¹⁷⁴ As such, the data collection instrument should be capable of yielding consistent results after repeated trials. As previously observed, this study sought to ensure that reliability was upheld throughout.

Data Collection Techniques

According to Kombo and Tromp, “In research, the term ‘data collection’ refers to gathering specific information aimed at proving or refuting some facts.”¹⁷⁵ The researcher sought to obtain a research permit from the Ministry of Education through the ILU in order to comply with the legal demands of the process. He also reached out to the potential respondents to build a rapport ahead of the data collection exercise.

This study employed primary data collection. According to Kothari, “The primary data are those which are collected afresh and for the first time, and thus happen to be original in character.”¹⁷⁶ Due to the sensitive nature of the targeted data and the statuses of the respondents, the researcher collected the data personally from the respondents. He delivered the questionnaires to about four respondents and conducted at least one face-to-face structured interview every day. The study targeted a total of 50 respondents comprised of 40 pastors and 10

173. Mugenda, 256.

174. Ibid, 250.

175. Kombo and Tromp, 99.

176. Kothari, C.R, 95.

bishops. The data collection exercise took a period of two weeks. The two methods of data collection ran concurrently.

Data Analysis Techniques

According to Kombo and Tromp, “Data analysis refers to examining what has been collected in a survey or experiment and making deductions and inferences.”¹⁷⁷ The process of data analysis includes an examination of the collected data, correcting errors, coding the data and keeping it in an organized way. Precisely, it is simply processing, organizing, analyzing and summarizing the collected data. It also entails making conclusions.

The collected data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 17.0. A systematic analysis method was used to analyze the open ended questions from the structured face-to-face interviews while graphs, pie-charts, percentages and frequency tables were used to analyze the close ended questions in the questionnaires. This exercise formed the basis of answering the research questions.

Logistical and Ethical Considerations

According to Mugenda, “Protecting the rights and welfare of the participants should be the major ethical obligation of all parties involved in a research study.”¹⁷⁸ I uphold Mugenda’s position because research deals with human beings who by law must be protected and their ethical standards upheld. As such, the researcher sought permission from the relevant authorities as a matter of priority. He ensured that all the ethical issues were observed and that the respondents’ participation was purely voluntary.

He also observed decorum and courtesy to foster an environment of genuine cooperation. Due to the sensitive nature of the targeted data, the researcher ensured that the collected data and the personal details of the respondents were kept in strict confidence and used only for the

177. Kombo and Tromp, 117.

178. Mugenda, 293.

purposes of this research. As such, the respondents were not required to write their names on the questionnaires. Confidentiality and anonymity were critical in ensuring that the participants' comments and ideas were respected. The researcher strictly adhered to all this.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

As earlier indicated, the purpose of this research was to investigate the major factors that contribute to leadership conflicts in selected Pentecostal churches within Nairobi and explore effective approaches of transforming the leadership conflicts. Since John P. Lederach invented the conflict transformation model in the early 1990s, scholars in this field have shifted attention to this recent model.

This chapter discusses findings of the collected data and presents the information in frequency tables, percentages, pie-charts, graphs and descriptive statistics according to the study objectives. The interpretation of the findings has been done to answer the research questions. The bio-data has also been analyzed and presented to provide relevant characteristics of the respondents.

Preliminary Information

The researcher began the process of data analysis by eliminating the unusable data. This is what Kombo and Tromp refer to as “pre-processing.”¹⁷⁹ This research, being qualitative in design, meant that the data collected came in as many categories as the number of the respondents. As such, the researcher created codes which he assigned to various responses which in turn determined how those responses were treated. He then keyed the information into the laptop and began the analysis. The collected data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 17.0. as earlier indicated in the previous chapter.

Response Rate

The questionnaires were self-administered to 40 pastors and 10 bishops. The findings from the study are recorded in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

179. Kisilu and Tromp, 111.

	Target respondents	Actual respondents	Percentage
Bishops	10	10	100
Pastors	40	40	100
Total	50	50	100

The researcher personally gave questionnaires to 40 pastors and interviewed 10 bishops face-to-face using the structured interview method. In addition to this, the researcher followed up with five out of the ten bishops with questionnaires so as to compare the data collected through interviews with the data collected through the follow up questionnaires. The study therefore targeted a total of 50 respondents comprised of 40 pastors and 10 bishops and all of them responded promptly. This represented 100% response rate. This means that the return rate of data collected was adequate for analysis and for making the study generalizations.

Personal Information of the Respondents

Gender of the Respondents

The study sought to establish the constituent of respondents by gender, and the findings are presented on Figure 4.1.

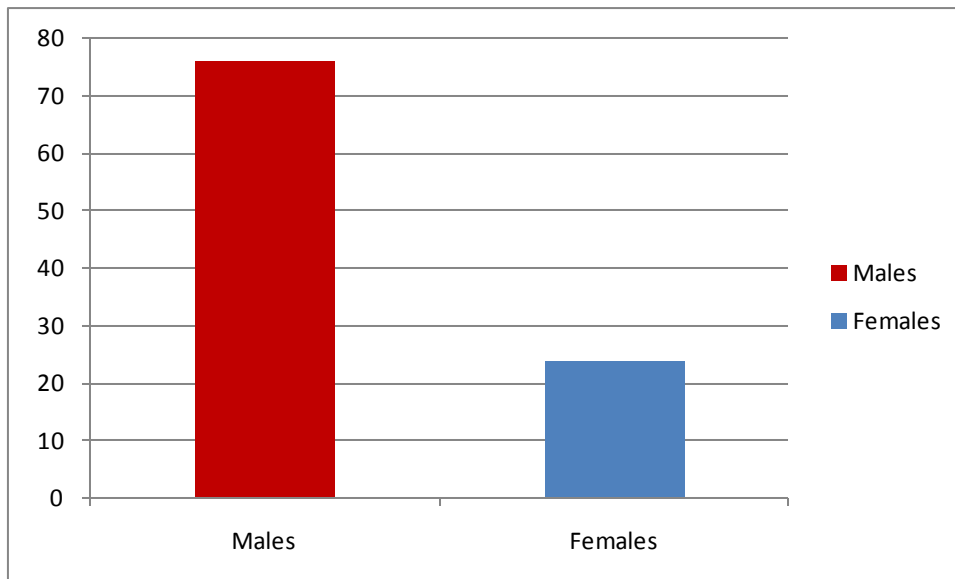


Figure 4.1: Gender of the Respondents

The study established that 76% of the respondents were men while 24% were females. This means that the churches have both men and women pastors. Having both genders represented was helpful in ensuring that their views were captured and the study was balanced. However, the study found out that men still dominated the pastoral office; hence they were the majority.

Age Brackets of the Respondents

The study sought to find out the age brackets of the bishops and pastors involved in the study and the findings are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Age Brackets of the Respondents

Years	Frequency	Percentage
20-29years	5	10
30-39years	19	38
40-49years	17	34

50-59years	6	12
over 60years	3	6
Total	50	100

The study established that majority of the respondents were between 30 and 59 years of age. This constituted 84% of the respondents involved in the study. This means that the respondents were mature and capable of leading their churches well. Only 10% of the respondents were less than 30 years while 6% were 60 years and above. In the opinion of the researcher, the views of both the youthful pastors as well as the aged bishops were all helpful in giving the research the balance it needed.

Marital Status of the Respondents

The findings on the marital status of the respondents are indicated on Figure 4.2.

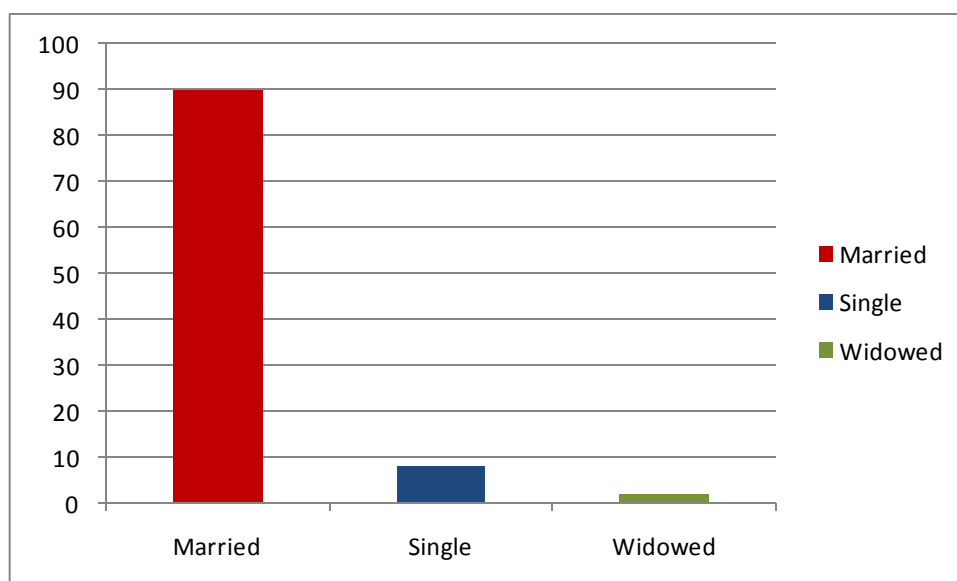


Figure 4.2 Marital Status of the Respondents

The study established that majority of the Respondents at 90% were married. This implies they were mature, able to shepherd congregations and perhaps experienced in handling people.

Education Level of the Respondents

The study wanted to find out the academic level of the respondents and the findings are indicated in Figure 4.3.

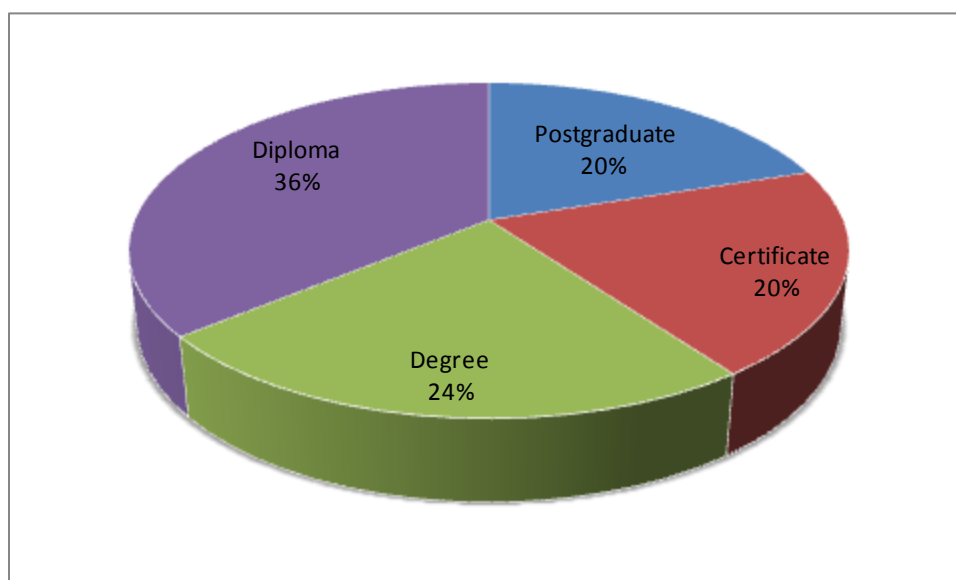


Figure 4.3: Education Level of the Respondents

The study established that the majority of the respondents had diploma certificate as their highest academic level, followed by degree holders. Precisely, the postgraduates constituted 20%, graduates 24%, diploma holders 36% while certificate holders constituted 20%. This means that all the bishops and pastors involved in this research were at least learned.

Level of Theological Training of the Respondents

The findings on the respondents' level of theological training are indicated in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Level of Theological Training of the Respondents

Level of Training	Frequency	Percentage
Certificate	20	40
Diploma	13	26
Degree	7	14
Post-graduate	6	12

None	4	08
Total	50	100

The study established that the majority of the respondents (92%) were theologically trained. This is entirely surprising given that the literature review had noted that majority of the Pentecostal church leaders were not theologically trained. However, a large portion of the bishops and pastors (40%) had trained in theology only at certificate level. It is important to note that 8% of the respondents had no theological training whatsoever. Since certificate level training may not be sufficient education for leading an urban church, it means 48% of the Pentecostal churches were more likely to suffer from theological incoherence and poor leadership.

This finding ties with Laurent Magesa's observation with regard to AIC's shortcomings as captured in the literature review. The implication is that the churches represented by the 48% would more likely experience leadership conflicts since theological training includes aspects that would help in navigating successfully through leadership conflicts. The study however found out that 26% had attained diploma in theology while 14% were degree holders.

Pastoral Experience of the Respondents

The findings on the respondents' pastoral experience are indicated in Figure 4.3.

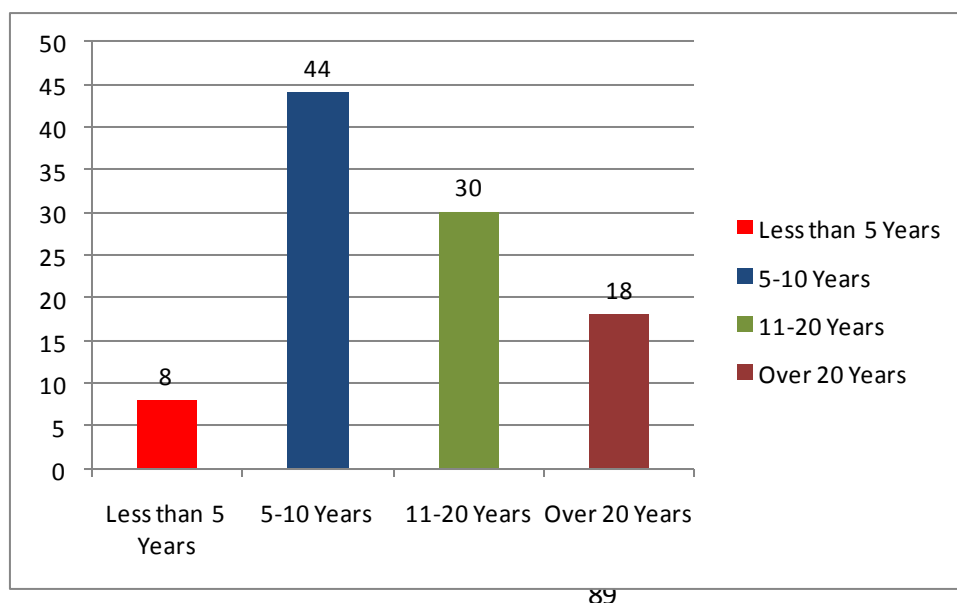


Figure 4.4: Pastoral Experience of the Respondents

A large portion of the respondents (44%) had pastoral experience of between 5-10 years. Those with over 20 years of pastoral experience registered 18%. There were two elderly bishops who had pastoral experiences of 52 and 53 years respectively. The study benefited a lot from their wealth of experience in addressing leadership conflicts. Those with less than five years pastoral experience constituted 8% while those with 11-20 years constituted 30%. With 92% registering a pastoral experience of five years and above, it implies that most of the respondents had adequate experience for church leadership.

Weekly Church Attendance

The study wanted to find out the weekly church attendance of the Pentecostal churches within the study area. The findings are recorded in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Weekly Church Attendance

Numbers	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 500	38	76
500-1000	6	12
1001- 2000	4	08
over 2000	2	04
Total	50	100

The study established that 76% of the respondents had churches that had weekly attendance of less than 500 members while 24% had big churches numbering over 500 members. This diversity was helpful in giving the study the comprehensive feedback it sought for.

The Major Causes of Conflicts among Church Leaders in Pentecostal Churches

The findings are grouped into four categories and indicated in Figure 4.5.

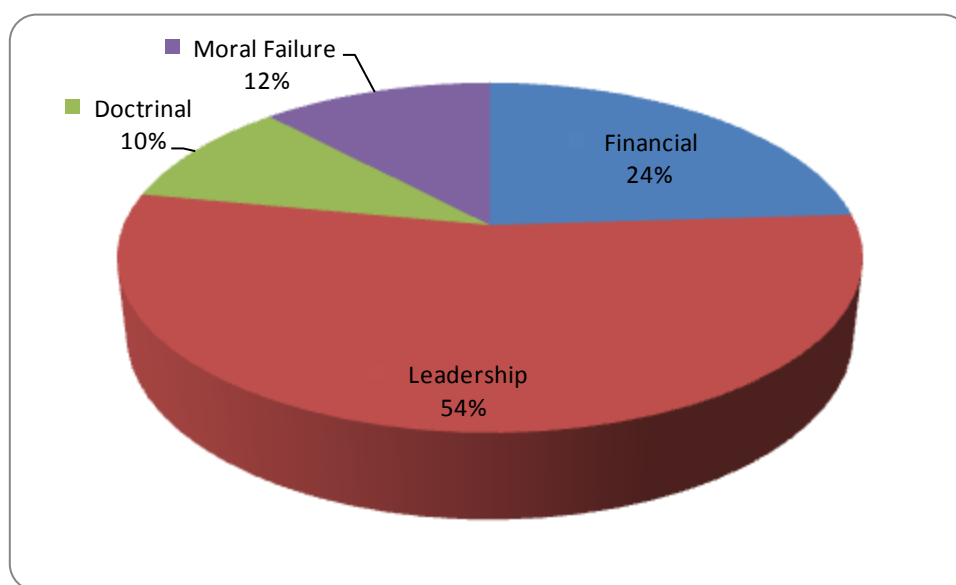


Figure 4.5: The Major Causes of Conflicts among PC Leaders

The study established that majority of the conflicts among the church leaders in the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi emanated from leadership issues. These constituted 54% of the types of conflict followed by conflicts springing from financial matters at 24%, while issues to do with moral failure made up 12% and conflicts of theological nature constituted only 10%.

Conflicts Emanating from Leadership Issues

The study found out that bishops and senior pastors in the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi wielded a lot of power and often misused it. This is the genesis of all these leadership related conflicts. The churches' governance structures were highly centralized with power concentrated in one center. Majority of the respondents (54%) admitted that bishops and senior pastors ran the churches like their own private businesses. They hired and fired church leaders at

will. In addition, they often manipulate the church constitutions and policy documents to suit their vested interests.

The findings agreed with the observations the researcher made in the literature review that highly centralized organizations are more susceptible to leadership conflicts as compared to decentralized organizations because they place a lot of power in one center. Even though the researcher did not identify leadership related issues as a major cause of leadership conflicts under the literature on major causes of conflicts, it features significantly under institutional structures. As such, this finding, which caught the researcher by surprise, is a consequence of loop holes in the church polity used by the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi.

Among the bishops interviewed, 80% admitted that the founders of the Pentecostal churches still held a firm grip over the running of the churches either directly or indirectly. One bishop stated categorically, “Our churches have not yet become institutions like the mainstream churches; they are still owned by the founders. As such, the founders’ factor is still a major challenge given that antagonizing him / her automatically elicits dire consequences.”

This finding agrees with the literature review’s observation that the oldest indigenous Pentecostal church, Deliverance church, is only 45 years old according to the Dictionary of African Christian Biography.¹⁸⁰ The implication is that majority of the founders of the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi are still alive.

The study established that bishops and senior pastors exercised their powers in a way that made them appear very powerful and this makes the other pastors and church leaders feel aggrieved, intimidated and abused leading to conflicts. Majority of the respondents at over 80% felt that the Bishops’ and senior pastors’ unchecked powers and poor leadership styles were the major source of leadership conflicts in Pentecostal churches within Nairobi.

Respondents indicated that Bishops and senior pastors viewed themselves as the vision carriers hence stood above board and could not be reprimanded by their juniors in case of a

180. www.dacb.org/stories/kenya/kayo_joseph.html accessed 4/25/2015

problem. Precisely, this is what Wayne Grudem refers to as “... too much power without sufficient checks and balances from others”¹⁸¹ as captured in the literature review. As such, the finding agrees with the literature review.

Conflicts Springing from Financial Matters

As depicted in Figure 4.4, 24% of the respondents indicated that finances were a major cause of conflicts among the church leaders in the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi. Since no one holds the bishops and senior pastors accountable, they not only abuse power but also abuse church finances. This finding agrees with Ken Sande’s observation in the literature review that conflicts occur in churches due to “... competition over limited resources, such as time or money.”¹⁸² The researcher also pointed out in the literature review that priority or value differences constitute major causes of conflicts. The findings also affirmed this cause as respondents cited misplaced priorities with regard to allocation of church finances by the bishops and senior pastors.

Majority of the respondents cited financial misappropriation, use of church money for personal projects and authorizing financial allocations to their cronies as topping the list of the said abuses of church funds. Any church leader who dared question the financial mismanagement was shown the door. Interestingly, the study established that this is how the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi have remained in a vicious cycle of leadership conflicts. To them, the priority is “themselves” and not God’s work.

Conflicts Emanating from Moral Failure

The study established that 12% of the respondents indicated moral failure as a major causal factor of conflicts among the Pentecostal churches within the study area. Morality has to do with the rightness or pureness of behavior and character. While James exhorts church leaders to “get rid of all moral filth” (James 1:21, NIV), Paul equally demands of them to be “blameless” (Titus 1:6, NIV).

181. Wayne Grudem, 925.

182. Ken Sande, 30

The respondents cited sexual immorality, greed, jealousy, envy, hatred, preferential treatment, tribalism, selfish ambitions, competition, among others as a major contributor to leadership conflicts. These findings agree with the literature review as pointed out under James' perspective. James refers to all these as "desires that battle within us" (James 4:1). Again, the literature review captured Ken Sande's sentiments that "Many conflicts are caused or aggravated by sinful attitudes and habits that lead to sinful words and actions."¹⁸³ The study affirmed these moral issues as a major cause of leadership conflicts.

Conflicts of a Theological Nature

According to Figure 4.4, 10% of the respondents indicated theological issues as a major cause of conflicts among the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi. The study noted that 48% of the respondents had attained certificate and below in terms of theological training. The implication is that those Pentecostal churches were more likely to suffer from theological incoherence and doctrinal issues. The respondents cited prosperity gospel, unbiblical deliverance teachings, unbiblical prophecies, manipulation and distortion of spiritual gifts, unbiblical use of the anointing oil, the teaching on feet washing among others, as some of the theological and doctrinal issues causing sharp disagreements among church leaders.

This is entirely surprising given that the researcher had pointed out theological differences as a leading cause of leadership conflicts in the literature review. The researcher would have expected to see this category topping the list. However, the findings revealed otherwise. From church history, theological differences have been at the center of church schisms. However, according to the findings, this is not a leading cause in as far as the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi are concerned.

Models of Conflict Approaches Employed by Pentecostal Church Leaders

The study investigated the models of conflict approaches that have been used by the Pentecostal church leaders within Nairobi. The findings are indicated in Table 4.5.

183. Ibid, 30.

Table 4.5: Conflict Approach Models Used by the Pentecostal Church Leaders

Conflict Approach Model	Frequency	Percentage
No attempt to address the conflict	6	12
Conflict Management Model	13	26
Conflict Resolution Model (Negotiation)	5	10
Conflict Resolution Model (Mediation)	4	08
Conflict Resolution Model (Arbitration)	5	10
Conflict Resolution Model (Litigation)	3	06
Conflict Resolution Model (Christian Conciliation)	4	08
Biblical Principles of Forgiveness and Reconciliation	10	20
Total	50	100

As depicted in Table 4.5, 12% of the respondents confessed that no attempt whatsoever was made to address the conflict. The study found out that in 100% of all the conflicts where no attempt was made to address them, the relationships were not preserved hence the conflicts were not transformed. The literature review has not addressed this scenario where nothing at all is done to address the conflict. However, it came out in the findings as new information. Strained relationships among church leaders can easily crystallize into a church break up as captured in the literature review.

The study also found out that 26% of the respondents had used the conflict management model to address their conflicts. This means that they only dealt with the surface issues while ignoring the substantive issues. This implies that the same conflicts may resurface in future because the substantive issues were not dealt with. Interestingly, the study noted that in 100% of all the conflicts addressed by using conflict management model, the relationships between the parties in conflict went cold. This means that conflict management model does not preserve relationships hence no conflict transformation took place in those cases.

The findings agree with the literature review's observation that conflict management model "... does not adequately capture the procedural nature of peace-building"¹⁸⁴ hence falls short of preserving relationships. The study established that majority of the respondents (42%) had used the conflict resolution model to address their conflicts. Precisely, negotiation accounted for 10%, mediation 8%, arbitration 10%, litigation 6% while Christian conciliation accounted for 8% all totaling to 42%. Conflict resolution model holds that if parties can be helped to explore, analyze, engage, question and reframe their positions and interests, then they can resolve their conflicts.

The study noted that litigation was the most notorious in terms of damaging the relationships of the parties involved in conflicts. In 100% of all the conflicts addressed by litigation, the relationships of the church leaders in conflict were damaged to the point of parting ways. This finding affirms Ken Sande's argument as captured in the literature review that, "Litigation throws relationships into complete disarray and precipitates bitterness between the parties."¹⁸⁵

The findings placed arbitration closely following litigation in terms of damaging the relationships. In 100% of all the conflicts addressed by arbitration, the relationships between the church leaders in conflict went cold. This again agrees with Ken Sande's observation that, "The primary disadvantage of arbitration is that relationship problems are ignored, which often perpetuates or aggravates personal estrangement."¹⁸⁶ As such, in both cases where litigation and arbitration were employed, the study established that there was no conflict transformation since the relationships between the church leaders were not preserved.

However, where mediation approach was employed, 90% of the relationships were preserved while 80% of the relationships were preserved where negotiation approach was used. According to the literature explored by the researcher, these two approaches tend to preserve

184. Wolfgang Heinrich, 4.

185. Ken Sande, 272.

186. Ibid, 272.

relationships. As such, the findings affirm Ken Sande's observation that mediation "... is less likely to damage a relationship than is a more adversarial process."¹⁸⁷ Precisely, mediation preserves relationships.

Amazingly, the study established that in 100% of the conflicts addressed by Christian conciliation approach, the relationships of the church leaders in conflict were preserved. This finding affirms the argument of Ken Sande in the literature review that Christian conciliation, "Promotes traditional values, preserves relationships, encourages meaningful change, avoids negative publicity, provides a positive Christian witness, and is relatively inexpensive."¹⁸⁸ As such, where Christian conciliation approach was employed, the conflicts were transformed according to the study.

The study further noted that 20% of the respondents addressed their conflict using the biblical principles of forgiveness and reconciliation. Again, in 100% of all the conflicts addressed by forgiveness and reconciliation, the relationships were preserved and even registered a better way forward than what was existing before the conflict. As such, the highest level of conflict transformation, as established by this study, resulted from the employment of biblical principles of forgiveness and reconciliation. As noted previously, in the context of this study, to reconcile is to make peace.

The findings agree with Ken Sande's observation as captured in the literature review that, "When used in the light of the gospel, these principles can rob conflict of its destructive tendencies and turn it into an opportunity to find lasting solutions to the serious problems, to experience significant personal growth, to deepen relationships, and, best of all, to experience and demonstrate the love of God in a new and life-giving way."¹⁸⁹

Suggestions on Preferred Approaches to Conflicts

187. *Ibid*, 271.

188. *Ibid*, 273.

189. *Ibid*, 16.

The study established that in cases where no attempt was made to address the conflict, one of the parties wished the conflict had been addressed. In cases where the parties simply managed the conflict or went to court, the study also found out that at least one party wished the conflict would have been addressed differently. The study noted that 50% of the respondents said that Matthew 18 process alongside other biblical principles would have been their preferred choice.

The study showed another 20% preferred to be reconciled by a mature servant of God like a bishop or a senior pastor while 10% preferred mediation. In all these cases, the respondents' preferred conflict approaches were all informed by their desire for preservation of relationships. With regard to conflict transformation model, as earlier noted, Hugh Miall conceptualizes it as "A process of engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourses, and, if necessary, the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflict."¹⁹⁰ As such, according to the study, even though majority of the respondents had employed other conflict approaches, their ultimate desire was transformation of the conflicts.

State of the Relationships after the Conflict

The study wanted to find out the state of relationships between the two parties after the conflict was addressed or not addressed. The findings are indicated on Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: State of the Relationships after the Conflict

State of Relationships	Frequency	Percentage
Relationships became cold / strained	33	66
Relationships remained at status quo	11	22
Relationships became better than before	6	12
Total	50	100

The study established from 66% of the respondents that after the conflict was addressed or not addressed, the relationships between them went cold hence they could not relate as before.

190. Hugh Miall, 3.

Precisely, their relationships were strained leading to parting ways in some of the cases. As such, empirical evidence attests to the fact that the models of conflict approach employed by 66% of the respondents didn't pay attention to preserving relationships hence these regrettable results. This perhaps explains why there have been rampant church splits in the Pentecostal churches within Nairobi. These findings affirm the argument advanced earlier in this study that perhaps the Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi have been employing non-transformative approaches to address conflicts.

As captured in Table 4.6, 22% of the respondents indicated that the relationships between them remained at status quo while 12% confessed that the relationships between them became even better than before the conflict. Especially where there was reconciliation through a servant of God, employment of forgiveness alongside other biblical principles, negotiation, and mediation, the relationships between the church leaders were preserved hence conflict transformation took place.

Biblical Principles used in Addressing Conflicts in Pentecostal Churches

The study wanted to find out whether bishops and pastors use biblical principles when dealing with conflicts in their churches. Amazingly, all the respondents (100%) agreed that biblical principles are very useful in addressing conflicts among church leaders. However, 80% of the respondents indicated that most of the times, the biblical principles are not employed due to vested interests. The bishops and senior pastors would rather push them aside to pave way for their own selfish agendas and interests. The findings affirm Ken Sande's sentiments to the effect that biblical principles "... rob conflict of its destructive tendencies and turn it into an opportunity to find lasting solutions."¹⁹¹

African Cultural Values used in Addressing Conflicts in Pentecostal Churches

The study wanted to find out whether bishops and pastors make use of the African cultural values when dealing with conflicts in their churches. Majority of the respondents at

191. Ken Sande, 16.

74% admitted that some of the African cultural values, especially the ones that are consistent with the Holy Scriptures are very useful in addressing conflicts among church leaders. Interestingly, 42% of the respondents confessed having used them at least once while dealing with a leadership conflict.

It was entirely surprising to find out that in 100% of all the cases where the respondents confessed having used the African cultural values, the relationships were preserved. This is perhaps because the Ubuntu concept emphasized the preservation of relationships as observed in the literature review. Interestingly, despite these amazing results, 26% of the respondents said that African cultural values have no place in the process of addressing conflicts among church leaders since they are not inspired.

In the opinion of the researcher, the African cultural values that are consistent with the Holy Scriptures can be very helpful in transforming leadership conflicts. However, as pointed out in the literature review, the negative perception created by the white missionaries about the African cultural values seems to still influence the Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi. This is perhaps why they appeared reserved with regard to the employment of African cultural values within the church setting.

Among the bishops interviewed, only 20% of them said they used the African cultural value of respect for the elderly at some point when dealing with a leadership conflict where their seniors were involved. The researcher found this surprising given that all these bishops are Africans. The findings revealed a gap worth investigating with regard to the balanced integration of our Christian faith with the African cultural values. There was a feeling among the majority of the respondents that this is syncretism. Perhaps, a study needs to be done on this area to update the church.

Institutional Structures Facilitating Conflict Transformation and Peace-building in

Pentecostal Churches

Whether Pentecostal Churches have Constitutions and Policy Documents

The study sought to find out whether the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi have constitutions and policy documents. The findings on the study are indicated in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Whether Pentecostal Churches have Constitutions and Policy Documents

Available Documents	Frequency	Percentage
Church has a Constitution and a Policy Document	35	70
Church has a Constitution only	11	22
Church has a Policy document only	2	04
Church does not have any of the two documents	2	04
Total	50	100

The study established from 70% of the respondents that their churches had constitutions and policy documents which governed the church operations, while 11% had constitutions only. It is important to note that a small percentage of churches (4%) had neither a constitution nor a policy document to guide the church. A further 4% had only the policy document. This finding disagrees with the argument the researcher had raised in the literature review that majority of the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi do not have constitutions and policy documents to govern their operations.

However, majority of the respondents indicated that despite their churches having the two documents, they were hardly followed whenever conflicts struck due to vested interests. This was corroborated by 80% of the bishops interviewed who shared the same opinion. This means that with regard to the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi, the presence of the two documents did not necessarily translate into implementation of the contents therein. This is entirely surprising given that the literature review did not explore this kind of scenario. This points to a gap worth investigating. Perhaps, a study needs to be done to investigate the factors that contribute to effective church administration in Pentecostal churches within Nairobi.

Forms of Governance Structures in Pentecostal Churches

The study sought to find out what governance structures the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi use. The study established from 100% of the respondents that Pentecostal churches in

Nairobi use Episcopal church polity. This finding is entirely consistent with the literature review. This means that power is concentrated in one center. As noted in the literature review, the demerits of this arrangement is that power can easily be abused leading to leadership conflicts. With the bishops at the top of their church administration structure and the rest below them, in case of any conflict or moral failure implicating the bishop, it becomes very difficult to hold him or her accountable.

This perhaps explains why the majority of the respondents indicated that despite their churches having both the constitution and the policy documents, they are hardly followed due to vested interests. The version of the Episcopal church polity practiced in Nairobi that concentrates power in one center with no provision to hold that center accountable was perhaps the mother of all these conflicts among the Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi according to this study.

The findings further indicated that the bishops and senior pastors abused power at will for lack of sufficient checks and balances from others. This observation is supported by the literature review in the words of Wayne Grudem who points out the necessity of “...guarding against the abuse of power that inevitably comes when any one human being has too much power without sufficient checks and balances from others.”¹⁹²

Whether Churches have Clear Chains of Command

The study wanted to find out whether the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi have clearly defined chains of command. Majority of the respondents at 80% indicated that they had clearly defined chains of command where the senior pastors are at the top followed by associate pastors, elders, deacons, heads of departments and discipleship group leaders. However, the hierarchy differed from one church to another except at the top. Another 18% indicated that their churches didn't have clear chains of command while 2% of the respondents were unsure.

192. Wayne Grudem, 925.

Interestingly, majority of the respondents said the chains of command were hardly followed to logical conclusions due to vested interests. This finding disagrees with the argument the researcher had raised in the literature review that majority of the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi do not have clear chains of command. However, it was equally surprising to find out that the bishops and senior pastors deliberately refused to implement the policies to the letter due to vested interests.

The Institutional Structures Helping to Address Conflicts

The study sought to find out what institutional structures have been in place in the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi that help to address conflicts among church leaders. The study established that 80% of the respondents had institutional structures in place that helped to address conflicts among church leaders while 20% didn't. Majority of the respondents cited national executive boards, local church councils, house of bishops, council of patriarchs, oversight committees, council of elders, conflict resolution committees, among others as part of the said institutional structures.

The study noted that the constitutions, policy documents and code of conduct provided the guidelines and procedures for addressing conflicts between church leaders. However, majority of the respondents indicated that the institutional structures were not fully functional and were at times manipulated by those at the top for selfish ends. The researcher took note of this finding that kept repeating itself. Perhaps, this is what Laurenti Magesa termed as, "...weak institutional structures"¹⁹³ associated with AICs in the literature review.

Whether Pentecostal Churches have Peace-building Programs

The study wanted to find out whether the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi have peace-building programs and initiatives intended to grow a culture of peace right inside the churches. The study found out that 32% of the respondents had no peace-building programs in their churches. Another 68% indicated they had programs intended to foster peace-building in their

193. Laurenti Magesa, 192.

churches. However, in the researcher's opinion, what they cited as examples of such programs turned out to be only mere regular church activities and not aggressive initiatives geared towards peace-building. As such, perhaps no single church could genuinely claim to have a peace-building program in the purest sense of it.

Majority of the bishops interviewed at 70% admitted that they had no peace-building programs in their churches. The 20% who said they had such programs only turned out to be making reference to team building activities. Interestingly, 10% of the bishops interviewed didn't see the need for peace-building initiatives in the church. They totally disagreed with the idea arguing that teaching the Scriptures was sufficient.

The findings agree with the argument the researcher had raised in the literature review that majority of the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi do not have peace-building programs and initiatives. However, it was entirely surprising to find out that no single church could genuinely claim to have a peace-building program in the purest sense of it. This perhaps points to the reasons behind the rampant church splits within the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi. The findings point to a gap worthy investigating. Perhaps, a study needs to be carried out to investigate the reasons behind this phenomenon.

Successful and Transformative Conflict Strategies

Whether Pentecostal Churches have Effective Leaders Dealing with Conflicts

The findings on the study are indicated in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Effective Pentecostal Church Leaders in Dealing with Leadership Conflicts

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	47	94
No	3	6
Total	50	100

The study established from 94% of the respondents that Pentecostal churches have leaders who handle conflicts effectively either within their churches or in other churches. However 6% of the respondents said they were not aware of any. The researcher wondered why 66% of the respondents' relationships were strained after the conflicts were addressed or not addressed if 94% of the churches had such effective leaders. Perhaps, these leaders have not been effectively utilized.

Characteristics of Church Leaders who Deal with Conflicts Effectively

The study wanted to find out the characteristics of the church leaders who have been consistently more effective in dealing with conflicts among the Pentecostal church leaders. Majority of the respondents said that the leaders are passionate about church unity, they are full of God's love, are good listeners, neutral, respected, mature, wise, know the Scriptures and are well informed.

Successful and Transformative Strategies used in Pentecostal Churches

The findings on successful and transformative conflict strategies used in Pentecostal churches in Nairobi are indicated in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Successful and Transformative Strategies Used in Pentecostal Churches

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Use of biblical principles	23	46
Use of Pentecostal church fathers (founders of churches)	11	22
Round table talks facilitated by a mediator	9	18
Involvement of Pastors' Fellowships / Associations	5	10
Not aware of any successful and transformative strategy	2	04
Total	50	100

The study established from 46% of the respondents that use of biblical principles had been of great help in transforming conflicts among church leaders. This is perhaps because the evangelicals take the Scriptures as the final authority in all matters of life. The biblical principles include Matthew 18 process, forgiveness and reconciliation, Ephesians 4:32 exhortation, prayer, extending grace to each other, kindness, among others. This is entirely consistent with the literature review. As previously noted, biblical principles have the capacity to rob conflicts of their destructive tendencies and turn them into opportunities for deepening relationships.

According to the study, another 22% indicated that the Pentecostal church fathers (founders of churches) have been acting as reconcilers in leadership conflicts both in their branch churches as well as among the church leaders of different Pentecostal denominations. As captured in the literature review, Pentecostal fathers (founders of churches) by virtue of their age, experience and the respect they command across the Pentecostal church denominations are better suited to handle conflicts among church leaders. As such, this finding agrees with the literature review.

The study further established from 18% of the respondents that use of round table talks facilitated by a mediator has been a successful and transformative strategy while involvement of Pastors' Fellowships / Associations registered 10%. A further 4% of the respondents were unaware of any. Amazingly, 100% of the bishops interviewed indicated that these four conflict strategies have been both successful and transformative.

All the above findings are consistent with the literature review. However, it is entirely surprising that African cultural values did not feature anywhere as a conflict strategy which has been transformative. As noted previously, 74% of the respondents affirmed the usefulness and relevance of the African cultural values. The 42% of the respondents who employed these values registered 100% preservation of relationships. As to why these amazing results did not convince the respondents to document the African cultural values as a transformative conflict

strategy leaves behind a lot to be desired. Perhaps, could it be that these church leaders use these values unconsciously?

Factors Contributing to Effective Conflict Transformation and Peace-building among the Church Leaders in Pentecostal Churches

The study also sought to find out the major factors that contribute to effective conflict transformation among the church leaders in the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi. The study established from 55% of the respondents that leadership conflicts can be effectively transformed if there is proper use of institutional structures and churches move from being owned by the founders to become institutions with functional systems that are working right. This finding entirely agrees with the literature review.

According to the study, 20% indicated that if Pentecostal churches embraced best professional practices where church accounts are kept professionally with annual auditing of the accounts, perhaps leadership conflicts could have been effectively transformed. As such, churches should be run professionally. This finding is new information which the researcher did not specifically capture in the literature review.

A further 12% of the respondents indicated that if there is proper use of biblical principles, leadership conflicts can be effectively transformed. Biblical principles not only help to transform conflicts but also address the moral issues that the study identified as a major causal factor of leadership conflicts. The study noted that 8% of the respondents were of the opinion that if the church leaders utilized the positive African cultural values, leadership conflicts could be effectively transformed while 5% indicated intentional homegrown peace programs as a major factor for transforming conflicts.

The researcher found it very interesting that finally the respondents came to identify the utilization of positive African cultural values and intentional homegrown peace programs as major factors contributing to effective conflict transformation among the church leaders. Given that this question was placed last both in the questionnaire and the interview guide, could it be

that a change of mind occurred in the process of responding to the questions? Why the sudden appreciation of these two factors which initially they were hesitant to identify with? Perhaps, the study provoked them to think.

Chapter Summary

The study findings revealed that every respondent who participated in the study had been involved in a major conflict with another church leader. These personal experiences helped them to respond to the questionnaires and interviews from a first-hand experience which made the collected data authentic. Majority of the respondents were males. The age bracket that had the most respondents was between 30 and 59 years and the highest number was married. Contrary to the arguments raised in the literature review, the study established that majority of the respondents were theologically trained.

The findings established that the four main causes of leadership conflicts among the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi were leadership related issues, financial mismanagement, moral issues and theological matters. The churches were found to have been using a version of Episcopal church polity that concentrates power in one center without sufficient checks and balances. This resulted in weak and dysfunctional institutional structures that easily gave room to all kinds of abuses.

The study further established that the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi employed models of conflict approaches that strained the relationships of the church leaders instead of preserving them leading to church splits in some cases. Doing nothing about the conflicts, conflict management model, arbitration and litigation approaches featured prominently as the models of conflict approaches leading to strained relationships. However, where negotiation, mediation, Christian conciliation, reconciliation through servants of God and biblical principles were employed, the conflicts were transformed.

Contrary to the argument advanced in the literature review, the study findings revealed that the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi had institutional structures in place to facilitate conflict

transformation. However, they were weak and dysfunctional. In addition, no single church registered a peace-building program. Use of biblical principles, utilizing Pentecostal church fathers as reconcilers, round table talks facilitated by mediators and involvement of Pastors' Fellowships featured prominently as the conflict strategies used in the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi which have been both successful and transformative.

Finally, the study noted that establishing strong institutional structures, making use of biblical principles, benefitting from the positive African cultural values, developing sound peace programs and embracing best professional practices were the major factors contributing to effective conflict transformation.

In the opinion of the researcher, most of the findings were entirely consistent with the literature review. However, some of the findings disagreed with the literature review while others provided new information. As such, after the data analysis, the researcher was able to answer the four research questions.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter covers the summary, conclusion and implications of the major findings from the study whose purpose was to investigate the major factors that contribute to leadership

conflicts in selected Pentecostal churches within Nairobi and explore effective approaches of transforming the leadership conflicts. The chapter also covers recommendations and suggests areas of further research.

Summary of the Major Research Findings

The following summary is based on the research findings and is organized according to the specific study objectives.

The Major Causes of Conflicts among Pentecostal Church Leaders

First and foremost, the study established that majority of conflicts among leaders in Pentecostal churches were caused by leadership issues. With regard to leadership issues, misuse of power featured prominently as the major cause of conflicts. This came about due to the loop holes created by the version of Episcopal church polity practiced by the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi which concentrates power in one center with no sufficient checks and balances. This resulted in bishops and senior pastors exercising their powers in a manner which made them appear extremely powerful to the extent that the other church leaders felt aggrieved, abused and intimidated leading to tension and conflicts.

The second issue leading to leadership conflicts was finances. Misappropriation, embezzlement and perhaps fraud featured significantly as the specific major issues. The study established that due to lack of accountability structures, the bishops and senior pastors abused church finances thereby straining the relationships between them and the other church leaders. Given that financial matters are rather emotive, in most of the cases, the conflicts resulted in the two going separate ways.

The third cause of leadership conflicts was identified as moral issues. Moral issues include sexual immorality, pride, greed, jealousy, envy, hatred, fits of rage, preferential treatment, tribalism, selfish ambitions, competition, among others. As God's servants entrusted with people's lives, church leaders are expected to live above reproach. However, the study

found out that some bishops and pastors led immoral lives and declined to be held accountable. This resulted in sharp conflicts.

Finally, the fourth issue leading to leadership conflicts was theological and doctrinal matters. Prosperity gospel, unbiblical deliverance teachings, unbiblical prophecies, manipulation and distortion of spiritual gifts, unbiblical use of the anointing oil, the teaching on feet washing, among others, came out clearly as the significant issues causing the church leaders to go separate ways.

In the opinion of the researcher, the first research question is adequately answered by these findings that have accurately identified the major causes of leadership conflicts among the Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi. This ties very well with the major causes of conflicts fronted by Anthony D' Souza and Ken Sande as captured in the literature review.

Models of Conflict Approaches Employed by Pentecostal Church Leaders

The second objective sought to investigate the models of conflict approaches employed by Pentecostal church leaders in addressing leadership conflicts. In this regard, the study found out the following: In all cases where no attempt was made to address the conflict or the conflict was addressed using conflict management, arbitration or litigation, the relationships were not preserved. As such, the conflicts were not transformed. Litigation was singled out as the most notorious in terms of damaging the relationships of the parties involved in conflicts.

However, where negotiation, mediation, Christian conciliation, reconciliation through a servant of God, African cultural values and biblical principles were employed, the relationships were preserved meaning that conflict transformation took place. Biblical principles of forgiveness and reconciliation produced the highest level of conflict transformation. The study further noted that even in cases where the relationships were strained, the parties involved wished the relationships would have been preserved. As such, resolving the conflict, preservation of the relationships and a better post-conflict status was the expressed desire of all according to the findings.

In the opinion of the researcher, the second research question is fully answered by these findings that have adequately revealed the models of conflict approaches employed by Pentecostal church leaders in addressing leadership conflicts. The desire for preservation of relationships expressed by all the respondents is entirely consistent with the arguments advanced in the literature review in favor of the conflict transformation model. Hugh Miall, as earlier noted, views this model as “A process of engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourses ...”¹⁹⁴

Institutional Structures Facilitating Conflict Transformation and Peace-building

The third study objective sought to investigate the institutional structures that have been in place in the Pentecostal churches which facilitate conflict transformation and peace-building. In the literature review, as previously noted, James D. Berkley observes, “Like other organizations, churches need rules that address matters of internal administration.”¹⁹⁵ Strong institutional structures functioning effectively provide a helpful framework within which conflicts are channeled. As such, contrary to the argument raised in the literature review, majority of the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi had institutional structures for facilitating conflict transformation.

However, the study found out that the institutional structures were weak and dysfunctional. This is an established characteristic of AICs as noted by Laurenti Magesa in the literature review. Abuse of church constitutions, policy documents, code of conduct and intentional disregard of the chains of command and the laid down frameworks for addressing conflicts featured significantly as the direct results of the weak and dysfunctional institutional structures. According to the study, the powerful unchecked “center” was perhaps responsible for weakening the institutional structures and making them dysfunctional leading to conflicts. In addition, the study did not find any church having specific peace-building programs and initiatives.

194. Hugh Miall, 3.

195. James D. Berkley (ed), 326.

In the opinion of the researcher, the third research question is sufficiently answered by these findings that have revealed the institutional structures that have been in place in the Pentecostal churches that facilitate conflict transformation and peace-building. The findings tie very well with the literature review.

The Successful and Transformative Conflict Strategies in Pentecostal Churches

Finally, the fourth objective sought to document outcomes of successful conflict transformation strategies in the Pentecostal churches. In this respect, the use of biblical principles, employment of Pentecostal church fathers (founders of churches) as reconcilers, round table talks facilitated by mediators and involvement of Pastors' Fellowships / Associations featured significantly as the main strategies. The use of biblical principles was listed top among the strategies perhaps because evangelicals take Scriptures as the final authority in all matters of life. The use of Pentecostal fathers came second perhaps because of the respect they command across the Pentecostal church denominations and hence can readily be listened to by all.

With regard to the major factors that contribute to effective conflict transformation among the church leaders in Pentecostal churches in Nairobi, the study identified a number of them as follows: First, proper and effective use of institutional structures. Effective conflict transformation can be realized if the institutional structures are strengthened, stabilized and allowed to work without undue interference. Secondly, the proper use of biblical principles came out strongly as a major contributing factor to effective conflict transformation among the church leaders.

The study established proper use of African cultural values especially those that are in line with the Holy Scriptures as the third major contributing factor. Given that Nairobi is within an African context, if African cultural values can be properly used, conflicts among church leaders can be effectively transformed. Development of sound peace programs and initiatives intended to grow a culture of peace within the Pentecostal churches came out well as the fourth

major factor. This calls for training of both the church leaders and members to approach conflicts biblically.

Finally, the study established that if the Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi can embrace best professional practices in running the churches, leadership conflicts can effectively be transformed. As earlier noted in the study, just like other institutions, Pentecostal churches ought to be run professionally making use of best leadership practices and competences that do not attract conflicts.

In the opinion of the researcher, the fourth research question is adequately answered by these findings that have documented outcomes of successful conflict transformation strategies in the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi. The findings added new information that was not captured in the literature review.

Conclusions

As previously indicated, the purpose of this study was to investigate the major factors that contribute to leadership conflicts in selected Pentecostal churches within Nairobi and explore effective approaches of transforming the leadership conflicts. The study concluded from the findings that Pentecostal churches in Nairobi had weak and dysfunctional institutional structures that had loopholes for abuse of power and financial mismanagement. The absence of accountability structures also made it difficult for the bishops and pastors to be held accountable whenever they are implicated in either moral or doctrinal scandals.

The findings of this study are entirely consistent with Laurenti Magesa's observation that, "AICs have their shortcomings, including lack of a coherent theology, weak institutional structures,..."¹⁹⁶ As such, the weak and dysfunctional institutional structures provide the loophole through which bishops and senior pastors manipulate the church constitutions and policy documents to serve their vested interests. This loophole has resulted in a version of

196. Laurenti Magesa, 192.

Episcopal church polity that concentrates power in one center with no provision to hold that center accountable.

According to this study, this was perhaps the mother of all the leadership conflicts among the Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi. As such, the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi ought to heed Wayne Grudem's caution of "...guarding against the abuse of power that inevitably comes when any one human being has too much power without sufficient checks and balances from others."¹⁹⁷

In addition, the churches utilized models of conflict approach which did not preserve the relationships among church leaders resulting in strained relationships and hostility among church leaders. Such conflict approaches included litigation, arbitration, conflict management and even doing nothing to address the conflict. However, the study established that leadership conflicts were effectively transformed when the church leaders made use of the models of conflict approach which focused on preserving the relationships like negotiation, mediation, Christian conciliation, reconciliation through servants of God and biblical principles of forgiveness, reconciliation, Matthew 18 process, extending grace to each other, kindness, prayer, among others.

The study further identified the use of biblical principles, employment of Pentecostal church fathers as reconcilers, round table talks facilitated by mediators and involvement of Pastors' Fellowships as the conflict strategies used in the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi which have been both successful and transformative. However, the study noted that if the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi have to transform leadership conflicts, they must establish strong and functional institutional structures, make use of biblical principles, benefit from the positive African cultural values, develop sound peace programs and embrace best professional practices and leadership competencies.

197. Wayne Grudem, 925.

Putting the whole study together, the researcher shares the opinion that conflict transformation model, tied with the biblical principles and informed by the African cultural approach is perhaps the effective approach to transforming conflicts among the Pentecostal church leaders in Nairobi.

Implications

As previously indicated, the core mandate of the church of Jesus Christ is the Great Commission. This mandate cannot be executed effectively when there are conflicts among church leaders. As AnthonyD'Souza observes, "People in conflict can divert a lot of time, energy and resources from reaching important goals."¹⁹⁸

The study found out that Pentecostal churches in Nairobi had weak and dysfunctional institutional structures that gave room for abuse of power and financial mismanagement. The absence of accountability structures also made it difficult to hold the church leaders accountable. This scenario has very serious implications for the health of the church. Church leaders left unchecked in this manner can easily mess up themselves and consequently mess up the entire church. This perhaps explains why there have been reported cases of Pentecostal church leaders who became heretics and continued to mislead the masses who followed them blindly.

With regard to financial mismanagement, the implications are equally detrimental to the health of the church. Absence of financial accountability on the part of the church leaders creates room for misappropriation, embezzlement and fraud. Whenever the congregants get to know their giving goes to somebody's pocket and not the church treasury, they naturally respond by withholding their tithes and offerings. This impacts negatively on God's work and the ministry in general. Besides, if the tithes and offerings end up in a bishop's pocket who cannot be held to account, when will the church ever develop? As such, this study is a "wake up" call to the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi to work on their institutional structures to make them water tight.

198. Antony D'Souza, 307.

The study further established that in all the conflicts where no attempt was made to address them or the conflict was addressed using conflict management, arbitration or litigation, the relationships were not preserved. In addition, adversarial approaches like litigation and arbitration were found to permanently damage the relationships of the church leaders involved in a conflict. The implication is that such church leaders cannot work together again except by God's grace. Damaged relationships often lead to church splits which in turn weaken the body of Christ.

On the contrary, where the church leaders had used the conflict approaches that preserve relationships, the leadership conflicts were transformed paving the way for a better way forward just like in the case of Paul and the Jerusalem pillars. In the same way the gospel went unhindered to both Jewish and Gentile worlds after the conflict between Paul and the Jerusalem pillars was addressed, the gospel would go unhindered in Nairobi and the regions beyond.

The findings of this study have great implications for today's church. Church leaders would know how to transform leadership conflicts not only as a way of averting sharp disagreements and subsequent church splits but also as a way of strengthening bonds and relationships among church leaders and members which is a prerequisite for fulfilling the Great Commission. When the church leaders enjoy healthy relationships devoid of tensions and conflicts, the same thing flows down to the congregants and vice versa. The implication is that there would perhaps be rapid church growth, more giving, healthy relationships, less church splits, and above all, greater capacity for the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

The research findings are therefore a "wake up call" to the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi. In John 17, Jesus prayed for His church to be "one" and that is His will for the church even today. The sooner the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi embrace the conflict approaches that not only resolve the conflict but also preserve relationships, the sooner they regain their credibility and become God's voice in the city.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations were made:

- i) The bishops and pastors of the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi should re-think their church polity with a view to introducing sufficient checks and balances to hold them accountable.
- ii) The Pentecostal churches in Nairobi should strengthen, solidify and tighten their institutional structures for the churches to become fully fledged institutions and not properties of individuals.
- iii) The bishops and pastors should adopt a system that guarantees transparency and accountability in the manner in which church finances are handled. The church finances should be kept according to professional accounting practices, duly audited and balance sheets read to the congregations at the end of the year.
- iv) The bishops and pastors should ensure that their leaders are conversant with their church constitutions, policy documents and church structures to avoid duplication of roles that breed leadership conflicts and also to eliminate conflicts of interest. This can be achieved through regular orientations, trainings and coaching.
- v) The bishops and pastors of Pentecostal churches in Nairobi should ensure that their leaders and congregants are well conversant with the administrative policies and procedures of their churches. This can be realized through membership classes, leaders' trainings and coaching.
- vi) The bishops and pastors of Pentecostal churches in Nairobi should ensure that their leaders and members know the chain of command in their churches very well to avoid unnecessary collisions that breed conflicts. Again, this can be realized through membership classes, leaders' training seminars, leadership coaching sessions and special orientation sessions.

- vii) The bishops and pastors of Pentecostal churches in Nairobi should intentionally develop programs and initiatives geared towards growing a culture of peace right inside the church. Peace should not be “enforced from outside” but homegrown.

Areas Recommended for Further Research

The study investigated the major factors that contribute to leadership conflicts in selected Pentecostal churches within Nairobi and explored effective approaches of transforming the leadership conflicts. However, there are other areas related to this issue that allow for further research. The study suggests the following areas for further research:

- i) To investigate the factors that influence the stability of Pentecostal churches in Nairobi.
- ii) To investigate the impact of conflicts on church growth.
- iii) To investigate the influence of church administrative structures on church growth.
- iv) To investigate the factors that contribute to effective church administration in Pentecostal churches within Nairobi.
- v) To investigate the impact of conflicts on the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire for Pastors and Bishops

My name is Joel Ngui Mwangangi. I am a Master of Divinity student at the International Leadership University. I am carrying out a research on **Effective Conflict Transformation in**

Church Leadership: Study of Selected Pentecostal Churches, Nairobi. It is my humble request that you respond to the following questions as honestly and truthfully as possible. Kindly, be assured that your identity and responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and the information will be used specifically for this research. For this reason, DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME on the questionnaire.

Section A: Personal Information

1. Gender: (a) Male [] (b) Female []
2. Age bracket in years: (a) 20 - 29 [] (b) 30 - 39 [] (c) 40 - 49 []
(d) 50 - 59 [] (e) Over 60 years []
3. Highest level of education: (a) Certificate [] (b) Diploma []
(c) Degree [] (d) Post-graduate []
4. Have you had any theological training? (a) Yes [] (b) No []
5. If yes, up to what level?
(a) Certificate [] (b) Diploma [] (c) Degree [] (d) Post-graduate []
6. Marital status: (a) Married [] (b) Single [] (c) Other: _____ []
7. Name of the Church: _____
8. Position in the Church: _____
9. How long have you been in Church leadership?
(a) Less than 5 years [] (b) 5 - 10 years []
(c) 11 - 20 years [] (d) Over 20 years []
10. Average weekly Church attendance:
(a) Less than 500 [] (b) 501 - 1000 []
(c) 1001 - 2000 [] (d) Over 2000 []

Section B

11. As a Pastor / Bishop, have you ever been involved in a major conflict with another Pastor / Bishop or one (or a section) of the Church leaders? If yes, briefly describe the conflict :

12. What was the major cause of the conflict? _____

13. In your opinion, what have been the major causes of conflicts among Pastors / Church leaders in the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi? _____

14. What conflict approach was used to address the conflict you have described? Tick only one:
- (a) No attempt was made to address the conflict []
 - (b) We simply managed the conflict []
(*Managing a conflict here means dealing with only the surface issues (symptoms) while ignoring the deeper concerns / core issues of the matter*)
 - (c) We negotiated for a mutually agreeable settlement []
 - (d) We agreed to just forgive each other and move on []
 - (e) We brought in an external Mediator []
 - (f) We sought the help of an Arbitrator []
 - (g) We went to Court []
 - (h) We were reconciled by a Servant of God who fully relied on the Christian values []
 - (i) Other: (Explain) _____ []

15. In your opinion, how else would you have wished the conflict to have been addressed? _____

16. Briefly, comment on the state of the relationship between you and the other Pastor / leader or leaders after the conflict was addressed / not addressed: _____

17. In your assessment, were your relationships preserved or they became strained after the conflict was addressed / not addressed? Tick only one:
- (a) Our relationships became cold after the conflict was addressed / not addressed []
 - (b) Our relationships remained as they were before the conflict []
 - (c) Our relationships became better than even before the conflict []

18. To what extent did you make use of the biblical principles in the process of addressing the conflict you previously described? Briefly comment and mention some of the biblical principles you made use of: _____

19. To what extent have biblical principles been helpful in the process of addressing conflicts among Pastors / Church leaders? Briefly comment: _____

20. To what extent did you make use of the African cultural values in the process of addressing the conflict? Briefly comment and mention some of the African cultural values you made use of: _____

21. In your opinion, are our African cultural values helpful in the process of addressing conflicts among Pastors / Church leaders? Briefly comment: _____

22. In your opinion, to what extent have institutional (organizational) structures been useful in providing a helpful framework for addressing conflict within the church? Briefly comment: _____

23. Do you have a church constitution and a policy document that govern the operations of your church? Tick only one:
- (a) We have both the constitution and the policy document [☐]
 - (b) We only have the constitution [☐]
 - (c) We only have the policy document [☐]
 - (d) We don't have any of the two documents [☐]
 - (e) We don't believe in church constitutions and policy documents [☐]

24. What form of governance structures does your church primarily use? Tick one:
- (a) Hierarchical, with appointed / anointed leaders (bishops, or the equivalent) ☐
 - (b) Hierarchy of Councils with elected representation by both Pastors and lay leaders ☐
 - (c) Democratic, (leaders are elected by congregations; and decisions are made by congregational votes ☐
 - (d) A mixture of a, b, and / or c (Explain): _____ ☐
25. In your church, to what extent has the chain of command been clearly defined such that every leader knows who to report to? If this is applicable to your church, briefly comment:
- _____
- _____
26. In your church, what institutional (organizational) structures have been in place to help address conflicts among Pastors / Church leaders? _____
- _____
- _____
27. In your church, what peace-building programs and initiatives intended to grow a culture of peace right inside the church have been in place? Briefly comment: _____
- _____
- _____
28. In your church, is there a particular Pastor / Church leader who has been consistently more effective in dealing with conflicts? (a) Yes ☐ (b) No ☐
29. If yes, what are the characteristics (qualities) that make him / her so effective? Briefly comment: _____
- _____
- _____
30. In your opinion, what conflict strategies used in the Pentecostal churches in Nairobi have proved to be more successful and transformative? _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

(*Transformative means the strategies used preserve the relationships of the leaders such that even after the conflict has been addressed, there is forgiveness, reconciliation, healing, better relationships and even a better way forward than what was existing before the conflict*)

31. In your opinion, what have been the major factors that contribute to effective conflict transformation among the Pastors / Church leaders? _____

32. Any further comments: _____

Thank you for your time and honest responses. God bless you richly.